

JUL 13 1961

# THE MONTH

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**JEAN PIERRE DE CAUSSADE**

GEORGE SCOTT-MONCRIEFF

**MORE AND HIS DETRACTORS**

JOHN McALEER

**NEWMAN AND VON HÜGEL**

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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
JEAN PIERRE DE CAUSSADE	<i>George Scott-Moncrieff</i> 5
MORE AND HIS DETRACTORS	<i>John McAleer</i> 14
NEWMAN AND VON HÜGEL: A RECORD OF AN EARLY MEETING	<i>R. K. Browne</i> 24
THE DIARY OF MARIE NOËL	<i>Ella Berg</i> 33
GALILEO AND THE JESUIT'S WATERCLOCK	<i>Conor Reilly</i> 42
ENTER THE COMMENTATOR	<i>Aloysius Church</i> 49
REVIEWS	52

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# JEAN PIERRE DE CAUSSADE

By

GEORGE SCOTT-MONCRIEFF

**A**LTHOUGH HE DIED only two hundred years ago, Jean Pierre de Caussade has left us practically without detailed information about his life. Only the barest facts are recorded. He was born in 1675, entered the Jesuit novitiate for the province of Toulouse when he was eighteen, taught classics, did his theological studies, was ordained in 1705 and took his final vows three years later. For the next six years he taught grammar, physics and logic, and was thereafter preacher and confessor in various parts of France before returning to Toulouse in 1740. The following year saw the appearance of the only book that he wrote as such, and even this was published anonymously so that it was commonly supposed to be the work of his fellow-Jesuit Paul-Gabriel Antoine, well known as a writer on Moral Theology. In the same year Caussade became Rector of the College of Perpignan. In 1744 he was Rector at Albi. In 1746 he returned to Toulouse and was director of the theological students there until his death in 1751.

Active and useful as it was, it is a life that remains lost in the obscurity of daily duties, a personal immolation entirely in keeping with Caussade's own teaching. Yet he lived at a time of painful disputes that had begun to disrupt the Christian world before his birth and that were still active sources of contention at the time of his death.

Even in the great days of the Spanish mystics anxiety over tendencies to quietism, an oriental inactivity passively awaiting the divine direction, had stirred an opposition that, whatever its justification, could become hysterical to the point of malevolence. St. John of the Cross himself was flung into prison by the Calced Carmelites of Toledo, and all he had written by that date, 1577, destroyed. Thereafter his writings were subject to suppression, destruction and to lavish interpolation, the addition of material

that sometimes made nonsense of his whole thesis, in order to place it beyond suspicion. Nor could the writings of St. Teresa of Avila be published until after her death. The gifted Augustinian author, Luis de Leon, spent five years in the prisons of the Inquisition for an inoffensive exposition of the *Song of Songs* and was thereafter tragically inhibited in what he wrote. Even the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius were under suspicion for illuminism, and the savagely anti-mystical Inquisitor, Melchior Cano, tried his best to have them condemned. Indeed, it was hardly safe for St. Ignatius to revisit his own country.

It was rather later, and from rather a different direction, that the wave of anti-mysticism hit France, although it received stimulus from the condemnation in Rome of the Spaniard Molinos in 1685 (although Molinos' *Spiritual Guide* was not actually published in France until later, under Protestant auspices). The main disputes were of course between the Jansenists, who in their antipathy to contemplation exploited the condemnation of Molinos, and the Jesuits, and between Fénelon and Bossuet. The development of Cartesian thought, with its emphasis upon rational introspection, was detrimental to the mystical approach to religion. This more psychological consideration of human motivation might usefully disperse much that was mere ignorance, but at a certain point it was liable to treat religion itself as ignorance. St. Francis de Sales illustrates in his development first the psychological approach, admirably exemplified in the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, and then, after he had been influenced, although not without initial misgivings, by St. Jane Frances de Chantal, the more mystical approach of *The Love of God*.

Madame Guyon, the wealthy widow whose undoubted proficiency in mystical forms of prayer influenced Fénelon, was a somewhat over-ardent type of lay missionary whose excesses, coupled with the jealousies and suspicions of others, finally brought the whole quietist dispute to a head. Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, a profounder and more impressive person altogether, supported her, and laid himself open to the attack of the powerful and brilliant Bishop of Meaux, Bossuet. Their dispute has become a matter of history. Whatever justice may have been on the side of Bossuet, the moralist, it is Fénelon, the mystic, who comes out of the affair better, for Bossuet certainly acted unscrupulously in publishing private documents and being

prepared to indulge in defamation if not even calumny. But it should not be hard for us to realise today the dangers that he was opposing: dangers of illuminism, private revelation, and all the squalor and hysteria of false mysticism.

He attacked these in a long and very learned treatise on prayer. This proved effective against the quietists, but it could also be used as a weapon against truly mystical prayer. There was a tendency amongst the moralists to segregate the mystics formally recognised and canonised by the Church and to treat them as a people apart, a people granted special graces by God whose teaching and way of life were not for everyman. At its worst this attitude could become tinged with Pelagianism; but even short of that it tended to discourage any intimate prayer of surrender to God. Behind it lay the fear that Christians might "bypass" the Incarnation, and allow certain self-induced states to dominate their spiritual lives. Yet it is plain that such mystics as St. John of the Cross, even without the editing of his writings, never departed from essential Christian doctrine for all his particular emphasis upon the nothingness that man can bring to the divine union.

Jean Pierre de Caussade's one deliberate entry into print was directly inspired by, indeed based on, Bossuet's great controversial treatise on the various states of prayer. But Caussade's contribution was not controversial. It was an effort to correct some of the stigma that overflowed from the vehemence of Bossuet's attack on false mysticism to the prejudice of truly mystical prayer. As Fr. Louis Cognet puts it, "Rightly observing that in his practice of direction the bishop of Meaux had proved far more favourable to mysticism than might have been expected, Fr. de Caussade drew from the Instruction of 1697 a complete theory of the interior life, of a type on the whole very like Fénelon's." But he adds, "This ingenious and paradoxical plea does not seem to have met with great success."

Caussade maintains that he himself learnt from Bossuet not only to detest false mysticism but also to value true mysticism. At the same time, in eighteenth-century France when the Jesuits were the object of attack from many bitter enemies, it was certainly shrewd of him to put forward his ideas under the umbrella of Bossuet. If his book met with no great success at the time, at least it was spared attack or suppression.

Besides his treatise *On Prayer* Caussade left a considerable number of letters, almost all addressed to nuns, which have been collected and published; but his masterpiece is the little book *L'Abandon à la Providence Divine*. Even this was not written by him for publication but compiled by a nun of the Visitation from letters and conferences. Here, it may be argued, we only have Caussade's teaching at secondhand; but much the same might be said of the treatise of Fr. Augustine Baker, *Sancta Sophia*, which is in fact compiled by another hand. Nor were the *Dialogues* of St. Catherine of Genoa actually written by her. We may properly credit the authorship of *Abandon* to Caussade, with due credit to the nun who compiled it and to Fr. P. H. Ramière, S.J., who, in the last century, reassembled the material in the form in which we now know it.

The late Dom John Chapman, Abbot of Downside, himself a much-revered director of souls, had the profoundest admiration for Caussade and refers to him in many of his letters, collected and published under the title *Spiritual Letters*. Writing the Introduction to the English edition of Caussade's book *On Prayer*, Abbot Chapman refers in particular to *L'Abandon à la Providence Divine* and traces Caussade's thought back to that of his spiritual father. He defines it thus:

The whole rule of our life is God's Will. At the last day we shall be judged according to our works. Our good works are those in accordance with God's Will at the moment we do them. They are our renunciation of self, they are the gift of ourselves to God. It is right to desire our own salvation and our own perfection, for this desire is a part of our nature. But we ought to desire it not only for our own sake, but still more for God's sake, because he wishes it, and made us for himself. Charity is not the love which wants to get (although that is good), but the love which wants to give, which is better; God's love can never want to get, but is always giving, always charity.

So our love is to be—a love which consists in giving ourselves to God. The active side is obedience to all God's commands, counsels, and inspirations; the passive side is the acceptance of all God does by *abandon*.

There is no English word for *abandon*, for "abandonment" is only just coming into use in this transferred sense. The doctrine is mere Christianity, and even Natural Religion; but it was formulated in a special way by St. Ignatius, who chose the word "indifference."



St. Francis de Sales took up St. Ignatius's teaching; he rejects such words as "conformity" (used by Scaramelli and others), or "resignation" (used by Fr. Baker), as less expressive than "indifference." St. Francis is perhaps ignorant of the word *abandon*, but this admirable word was used by the French writers of his generation and the next. De Caussade takes it from his master, Bossuet: *Abandon à la divine Providence*.

The doctrine, however, he has derived not so much from Bossuet as from his Father St. Ignatius, who begins and ends his exercises with this simple and sublime teaching: in the Foundation he lays it down dryly, with irresistible logic; in the final *Contemplatio ad amorem* he spiritualizes it as the conclusion of the whole retreat: *Sume et suscipe, Domine, universam meam libertatem. . .*

In *Abandon* Caussade assumes his reader to have graduated by meditation to the need for a more intimate prayer and with it a more immediate practice of the life it inspires. What Caussade illustrates is not necessarily an exalted mysticism, it is simply that element of quiet in the Presence of God that must in greater or lesser degree become an integral part of man's personal approach to his Creator. It is the shedding of worries and of all worldliness which, even if only passingly realised, enables him to speak in silence, and thereby sometimes to apprehend the peace that passes understanding. Worries are rooted in past and future, we can only be liberated from them by accepting what Caussade has so tellingly defined as "the sacrament of the present moment." It is plain that if a man could live his life in constant reference to God's will the whole of that life would be sacramental. We sometimes get glimpses of what this could mean in the lives of the saints. To Caussade the old question whether the mystical approach is for everyone does not present difficulties if we see mystical prayer as not confined to the exaltation of the great mystics but simply as a necessary, often unconscious element; mystical in the proper sense of being the *hidden* part of our speaking to God. Although he stresses the need for an arduous preparation during which "God instructs the heart not by means of ideas, but by pains and contradictions," he declares "I wish to show all that they may lay claim, not to the same distinct favours, but to the same love, the same self-abandonment, the same God . . . and to eminent sanctity."

These and the following passages are quoted from Algar

Thorold's translation of *l'Abandon*, entitled in English *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*. To this translation another Benedictine writer, Dr. Knowles, contributed a valuable introduction in which he traces the influence of St. Francis de Sales and of St. John of the Cross upon Caussade's thought. Indeed, he considers Caussade's distinctive achievement to lie in making a synthesis of the Salesian and Carmelite traditions. Just as the effect of his association with St. Jane Frances de Chantal is evident in the development of Francis de Sales' thought, so Caussade's work amongst her spiritual daughters must as certainly have influenced him. If Caussade seems to have had little direct contact with the Carmelites, Dr. Knowles considers that "he alone of the great French spiritual writers superimposes on the Salesian teaching of self-abandonment and simplicity the typically Carmelite emphasis on grace as a dynamic force, enlightening and cleansing the soul." And Dom Roger Hudleston, in his *Memoir of Abbot Chapman*, defines it thus:

The development peculiar to Caussade consists in this: that, while every soul which is really trying to live an interior life endeavours to do God's holy will always, everywhere and in all things, de Caussade insists that it best achieves its end, *not* by anxious search after God's "signified will" (*voluntas signi*), not by deliberate acts of resignation to his "will of good pleasure" (*voluntas beneplaciti*), but by simply receiving what comes to it, moment by moment, and abandoning itself thereto; accepting and *willing* everything because it comes as God's will for that soul *hic et nunc*, in this actual moment of time, which is the only moment in the soul's control.

Because of distrust of a suspected passivity in Caussade's advocacy of "abandon" he has been accused of encouraging a tendency to quietism. This was cogently refuted by Abbot Chapman who pointed out that Caussade's "abandon" to God's will was essentially active, not a form of resignation but an active willing, therefore an uniting of our own will with God's will. In Caussade's own words "the soul is active as far as concerned with her present duty, but passive and abandoned as regards all the rest, where her only action is to await in peace the divine motion." Abbot Chapman summarised this by saying that while we may never know God's will for us at any future moment of time, we may learn to discern His will for us for the present moment, the one and only thing of time that we can ever possess



and make our own for good or evil. We may plan for the future, but our planning must be relaxed so that our knowledge that we have no certainty of its outcome may still be a happy acceptance.

Caussade's teaching, indeed, seems particularly well adapted to those living an active life, a life in the world. He carries asceticism the necessary stage further when he defines as a double process the reduction of all created things "First to nothing, and then to the point that they have to occupy in God's Order," for, "Since God is in all things, the use we make of them by His Order is not use of creatures but rather enjoyment of the divine action which dispenses its gifts through different channels."

This is intrinsically the same ideal as that of those who live their lives withdrawn from the world; of the anchoress, Julian of Norwich, who prayed: "God, of thy goodness, give me thyself: for thou art enough to me, and I may nothing ask that is less, that may be full worship to thee, and if I ask anything that is less, ever me wanteth,—but only in thee I have all."

For those in the world Caussade's definition makes it clear that to pray thus is not to aspire beyond anything they might ever hope to approach in their own lives, but simply to express the essence of the Christian longing. At the same time it controverts the approach of the Jansenists and of all who would make Christianity a cold, negative and puritanical creed in which creatures are of their nature a detraction from God, for it restores love of creation to its true place as part of the love of the Creator who himself loves the world divinely.

Such love, everlastingly exemplified in the Redeemer, entails suffering. With many beautiful and penetrating turns of phrase (and he is a recognised master of French prose) Caussade emphasises our need to accept the suffering incidental to our own lives, to strive for perfection through that acceptance lovingly made rather than to devise extraneous mortification. This, he says, is a true humility, the one-ing of ourselves with the Divine Will. And here he warns the soul against being "determined to action by ideas or tumults of words which by themselves merely inflate her." Purely natural reason must give way before faith, "the light of time," since "our understanding" which "wishes to take the first place among the divine methods . . . must be reduced to the last." Here we recognise in another context those nights and those clouds of unknowing of the great mystics, and we see them,

as it were, brought within our own sphere of experience. Paradoxically, it can give us some understanding of what is happening to us when we have lost faith in our own understanding of ourselves, teaching us that, in Caussade's words, "The divine action . . . can only take possession of a soul in so far as she is empty of all confidence in her own action."

There is in Caussade's doctrine a gentleness not enervating but stimulating, not concealing the rigour of the demands made upon us but presenting them with a sweet reasonableness. There is no escaping the burden of our humanity: the difference between the good man and the bad is simply that where one accepts what has happened to him and uses it for the enrichment of his soul, the other resents it and tries to change it by arbitrary action or by taking refuge in the pride of imagination. The life of faith as advocated by Caussade

consists of joy in God's gift and a confidence founded on the expectation of His protection which makes everything harmonise and makes us receive everything with a good grace. It produces a certain indifference of soul and prepares us for all situations, all states and all persons we may meet. Faith is never unhappy, even when the senses are in a state of desolation. The soul ever maintains a living faith in God and in his action beyond the contrary appearances that darken the perceptions of the senses.

The proud man, on the other hand, "is an enigma incomprehensible to himself, but very intelligible to a simple soul enlightened by faith."

This acceptance or "discovery of the divine action in all that passes within us and around us is the true science of things," and Caussade goes on to say:

*Quand Dieu se donne ainsi, tout le commun devient extraordinaire; et c'est pour cela que rien ne le paraît; c'est que cette voie est par elle-même extraordinaire; par conséquent, il n'est pas nécessaire de l'orner de merveilles qui ne lui sont point propres. C'est un miracle, une révélation, une jouissance continuelle, à de petites fautes près; mais, en soi, son caractère est de n'avoir rien de sensible et de merveilleux, mais de rendre merveilleuses toutes les choses communes et sensibles.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> When God gives himself in this way, the ordinary becomes extraordinary, and this is why nothing seems extraordinary. For this path in itself is extraordinary and it is quite unnecessary to adorn it with irrelevant marvels. It is itself a miracle, a revelation, a continuous joy, apart from our trifling venial faults, but it is a miracle which, while it renders marvellous all our everyday life of the senses, has nothing in itself that is marvellous to the senses.

There is a rare sense of integration in *l'Abandon*. To Caussade prayer is something increasingly to be lived. Fr. Ramière, in editing the papers that compose it, made an effort to separate what he considered the instructions for acquiring the virtue of *abandon* from the material primarily intended for those proficient in it. The second part opens: "There is a time when the soul lives in God and a time when God lives in the soul. What belongs to one of these periods is unsuitable for the other. When God lives in a soul, she should abandon herself completely to his Providence." But many souls far from proficient in the life of faith may gain a much more profound understanding of its demands and of that transcendent element in it that is offered to all who even feebly seek the Kingdom: the element that makes our faith not just an ethical system on which the spiritual life is a mere gloss used partly to cover up what cannot be readily explained, but a unity concerned simultaneously with body and soul, verily a wholeness in Christ. To see the present moment as a sacrament, for our part in which we are immediately answerable, is to see the utter necessity for the integration of the spirit in our daily life, and to apprehend the joy that would ensue from the transformation of that life into a state of prayer. Abandon means just that to Caussade, a constant acceptance, not in any sense one that discards necessary activity but rather absorbs it into its place in the spiritual life, so that the humblest and most obscure tasks may be transformed by gaining a sacramental significance.

There is an academic approach to spiritual writings by which theologians may decide the soundness of their doctrine, and here Caussade's orthodoxy is beyond dispute. There is inevitably a more subjective approach, more strictly practical and one that must remain primarily a matter of personal predilection. We commonly experience the curious way in which a book that seems to us personally to cast great light upon the dark places of the soul, makes hardly any impression upon another even when that person is one with whom we feel we have much in common. Tastes, and therefore needs, in the matter of spiritual reading seem to be as varied, perhaps as unpredictable, as tastes in aesthetics or humour. Nor would it be possible, even were it seemly, to judge the spiritual progress of another simply by the books that he finds pertinent, for there are many approaches to the many mansions. But it is certain that numerous souls, in the

words of Dr. Knowles, "have found in Caussade their greatest stay—perhaps their only resource—at a particular period in their spiritual life. How many others have found, not this, but—sure token of a classic—a steady friendship to which they can return again and again, not at a period of crisis but during the ordinary flow of life." Abbot Chapman aligned himself with these unequivocally when he wrote, "I have found no writer so helpful to myself as Fr. Jean Pierre de Caussade. . . . He speaks from experience and from the heart. His words are lighted up with a magic splendour by his enthusiasm and zeal."

## MORE AND HIS DETRACTORS

By

JOHN McALEER

**T**ODAY, twenty-five years after his canonisation, Thomas More is still a controversial figure among historians sympathetic to the Reformation. Professor Herschel C. Baker of Harvard University writes:

Sir Thomas More, who has received more praise than he deserves, was characterised by an extreme, even fanatic orthodoxy. . . . In many ways he reminds one of Savonarola: they were both men of intransigent orthodoxy, who probably welcomed martyrdom, and they may both be fairly charged with piety mounting (or deteriorating) almost to fanaticism. Perhaps there are a few arguments against heresy in Plato and Aristotle, Savonarola admits, but "they and other philosophers are now in Hell." In matters of dogma, More was equally severe. Although those celebrated passages of sweetness and light in *Utopia* urge the utmost tolerance in religion, it is hard to reconcile More's principles with his practices. To him, Tewkesbury, who had translated Luther and had died for his audacity, was only a "stinking martyr."<sup>1</sup>

These charges have been levelled against More under one form or another ever since the publication of John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* in 1559, nearly twenty-five years after More's death.

<sup>1</sup> *The Dignity of Man*, by Herschel C. Baker (Cambridge, Mass., 1947).

The attacks are mounted in various ways, but all his detractors fall back on More's "fanaticism," which is apparently the only accusation for which a case can be made out. The reasonableness of More's opposition to Henry VIII was conspicuously upheld by later events in the king's reign. The conduct of More's personal life was irreproachable, and the manner of his death was so glorious that no one could undertake to disparage him on these grounds. One would expect, then, that for the charge of fanaticism to be current against More today, four hundred years after it was first made, it must by now be well substantiated.

Several accusations have been made against him on this score. It is said that with the onset of the Reformation in England, More repudiated his Utopian policy of tolerance and adopted a directly antithetical view. He declared openly that heretics were more despicable than murderers and church-robbers and composed violent diatribes against them. He persecuted them ruthlessly, using his own home in Chelsea as a torture chamber, and personally directed their scourgings and ordeals on the rack. As Chancellor he caused heretics to be "destroyed," and it is further alleged as a most damning bit of evidence that More introduced into his own epitaph the words *furibus autem homicidis, haereticisque molestus*. To imply that hypocrisy was habitual with him, these charges are usually projected against an image of More as philosopher, law-giver and martyr.

I would like now to examine these charges, and discover what substance is to be found in them. In 1515, with England still tranquil, More wrote in Utopia:

For King Utopus, hearing that the inhabitants of the land were before his coming thither at continual dissension and strife among themselves for their religions; perceiving also that their common dissension was the only occasion of his conquest over them all; as soon as he had gotten the victory, first of all he made a decree, that it should be lawful for every man to favour and follow what religion he would, and that he might do the best he could to bring other to his opinion; so that he did it peaceably, gently, quietly and soberly, without haste and contentious rebuking and inveighing against other. If he could not by fair and gentle speech induce them into his opinion, yet he should use no kind of violence and refrain from displeasing and seditious words. To him that would vehemently and fervently in this cause strive and contend, was decreed banishment and bondage.



This law did King Utopus make, not only for the maintenance of peace . . . but also because he thought this decree would make for the furtherance of religion. . . . Furthermore though there be one religion which alone is true, and all others vain and superstitious, yet did he well foresee . . . that the truth of the one power would at last issue out and come to light. But if contention and debate in that behalf should continually be used, as the worst men be most obstinate and stubborn, and in their evil opinion most constant, he perceived that then the best and holiest religion would be trodden under foot.<sup>1</sup>

This passage stands pre-eminent among "the celebrated passages of sweetness and light" which, Professor Baker concludes, "urge the utmost tolerance in religion." But More does not here advocate tolerance at any cost. He does not suggest that men should practice tolerance to perpetuate error, but in order that the truth might be revealed. He believes that tolerance is necessary to keep "the best and holiest religion" from being "trodden underfoot," but he also says that "King Utopus punished any violent religious propaganda by bondage—and bondage in Utopia meant death, if the bondsman continued to be violent."<sup>2</sup> He maintains that the state may resort to violence, not to enable the faithful to impose their views on heretics, but to prevent heretics from imposing their views on the faithful. Thus R. W. Chambers rejects as fantastic Creighton's opinion that More, "when he wrote *Utopia*, held views on toleration which he later abandoned."<sup>3</sup> In *Utopia* More advocates both peaceful discussion of religious difference and the suppression of those who would "vehemently and fervently in this cause strive and contend." He was never to abandon this position.

To More, tolerance was simply a matter of expediency, not a principle to be advocated for its own sake. He offered it as an alternative to a controversy which could benefit no one and might destroy good and bad together. He believed that in a calm atmosphere truth would "come to light," but if it failed to do so More would have held that the principle of toleration was invalidated. Error was not to be allowed to persist indefinitely.

So it would be wrong to assume that More had changed these views on toleration because he carried out so zealously the

<sup>1</sup> *Utopia*, by Thomas More (Oxford University Press, 1904).

<sup>2</sup> *The Place of St. Thomas More in English Literature and History*, by R. W. Chambers.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

command of the Bishop of London to controvert heresy. The "best and holiest religion" was being trodden underfoot. The heretics were not content to persuade men "by fair and gentle speech," or to worship quietly in their own churches; they were vituperative and they directed physical as well as verbal abuse against the Church. They had to be answered for the good of the realm, and in fact, though reduced to penury after he resigned the Lord Chancellorship, More refused to allow his family to accept from the Bishops the £4,000 they offered as payment for his work.

But the vigour with which he refuted their teachings is no evidence that More ill-treated the heretics who came under his jurisdiction as Chancellor. If he ranked heretics as worse than murderers he was following the precedent of St. Paul.<sup>1</sup> But in his *Apology* he answers the accusation that he had tortured heretics in his home at Chelsea by saying, "Of all that ever came in my hand for heresy, as help me God, saving (as I said) the sure keeping of them, had never any of them any stripe or stroke given them, so much as a fillip on the forehead."<sup>2</sup> Sir James Mackintosh comments: "This statement, so minute, so easily confuted if in any part false, was made public after his fall from power, when he was surrounded by enemies. . . . It relates to circumstances of public notoriety . . . which it would have been a proof of insanity than imprudence to have alleged in his defence if they had not been indisputably and confessedly true. Defenceless and obnoxious as More then was, no man was hardy enough to dispute his truth."<sup>3</sup> The evidence John Foxe produces to show that More subjected heretics to torture at his home, or elsewhere, has been so fully exposed as a mixture of garbled report and idle hearsay that today not even the most hostile critics use it against him. Again, it has been claimed that though More was too careful to involve himself personally in torturing heretics, he at least sanctioned their execution during his chancellorship. But Erasmus states that "It is a sufficient proof of his clemency that, while he was chancellor, no man was put to death for these pestilent dogmas, while so many suffered capital punishment for them in France, in Germany, and in the Netherlands."<sup>4</sup>

The phrase found in More's epitaph, *furibus autem, homicidis, haereticisque molestus*, has also been used as evidence that he ill-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. v 20.    <sup>2</sup> *The Apologye of Sir Thomas More, Knyght* (London, 1930), p. 133.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. lxxvii-lxxviii.    <sup>4</sup> *Memoir of Sir Thomas More* (London, 1834), p. 124.

treated heretics imprisoned under him. Indeed, there were many reasons why More should believe that heresy was so dangerous that it had to be stamped out at any cost. In the fourth book of the *Dialogue Concerning Heretics* More describes the atrocities committed at the sack of Rome by the Imperial army; he attributes them chiefly to the German heretics. He stresses the fact that the heretics of his day were attacking, in grossly blasphemous terms, beliefs that were sacred to most Englishmen. Contrary to royal and episcopal command they distributed their writings and proselytised among the common people. In *Utopia* he says "The fear of these outrages and mischiefs to follow upon such sects and heresies . . . have been the cause that princes and people have been constrained to punish heresies by terrible death." The fact that they caused civil disturbance was sufficient reason for More to crush them with whatever severity was necessary.

But More made very moderate use of the power given him to suppress heresy. He kept it in check not by physical violence but by writing logical and incisive attacks on the heretics and their teachings. These skilful and apposite attacks were capable of raising havoc among heretics. But beneath the rhetorical severity there is the greatest gentleness, concern and love for those who have lost the true religion. In the *Apologye* he says "As touching heretics I hate that vice of theirs, and not their persons"; of John Frith who had written denying the Real Presence, he says with moving compassion, "I would be glad to take more labour, loss and bodily pain also than peradventure many a man would ween to win that young man to Christ and His true faith again." More once told Roper that he would readily let himself be trussed in a sack and tossed in the Thames if three things came to pass: universal peace among Christian princes, heresy laid to rest, and perfect uniformity of religion realised, and the settlement of the King's marriage to the glory of God and the peace of the realm. Secretly More observed many penances to obtain the goals he desired so ardently. To end heresy he really persecuted one person—himself. He rarely allowed himself more than four or five hours' sleep; his bed was a hard bench or the ground, and he used a log for a pillow. He was a vegetarian, although Erasmus had known him to take "corned beef and weak beer" so as "not to make his companions uncomfortable."<sup>1</sup> On Fridays and other

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from Sir Thomas More*, by P. S. and H. M. Allen, O.U.P., 1924.



fast days he used the discipline; and on her last visit to the Tower More gave his daughter Margaret the hair shirt which he had worn throughout his public life "so that it might not be imputed as a proof of ostentatious piety."<sup>1</sup> It is of this man that Erasmus said, "His nature may be read in his face, always pleasant and friendly and cheerful, with a readiness to smile"; the man whom Roper, during sixteen years under the same roof had never once seen "in a fume." His good-humour and loving-kindness did not stop short of the grave: to those who condemned him his last words were, "I verily trust, and shall therefore right heartily pray, that we may yet hereafter in Heaven merrily all meet together, to our everlasting salvation." If More had shown such compassion, such paternal regard for heretics, undertaking to mortify his own flesh to gain God's grace for his enemies, while at the same time he was presiding over their torture, he would have been a sadist, a hypocrite and the most depraved of men. But no hint can be found of such inconsistency. He alone of the great magistrates of his day put not one man to death for heresy. He castigated, he menaced with words those who stood opposed to the Church, but to win them to Christ he offered gladly to suffer himself, and at last, for their sake, laid his neck on the block.

Those who believe that he died in vain should consider the fact that for four hundred years the great figure of More has stood at the threshold of the Reformation in England. No one crosses into the new age without being compelled to consider who More was and what he died for. It is small wonder, then, that historians sympathetic to the Reformation have never ceased to search for some means of ridding themselves of his troubling presence. But his manifest integrity plainly refutes all the evil spoken of him.

The principal criticism directed against More is taken from the *Book of Martyrs*, and rests on evidence that does not bear close scrutiny. It is worth considering the reasons why these accusations were not abandoned long ago. More is an attractive figure, and he died defending the right to obey his conscience rather than the laws of the state—an admirable position to the latter-day Protestant. But one cannot wholly approve of More without approving of the convictions he died to uphold. He is as much of a stumbling block to the Protestant historian as he was to

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Sir Thomas More.*

Henry VIII; both, lacking legitimate evidence, had to trump up charges against him.

John Foxe, the martyrologist, was close enough to the time of More's martyrdom to realise that bold measures had to be taken if the Reformation was to be held in good repute. He seized on More's role as a scourge of heretics, and More is soon depicted fittingly "imprisoned in the very cell . . . wherein he had sat as grand inquisitor aforetime racking heretics." The reader's disgust at More would, of course, be heightened because he was persecuting the people from whom their own religious beliefs derived. Later apologists for the Reformation in England have recognised Foxe's aims in denigrating More, and have realised that he chose the only possible grounds for an attack on him. But although the *Book of Martyrs* satisfied the people of Foxe's time and continued for centuries to convince the credulous, it makes no pretence of being objective. Later historians have had to maintain at least an appearance of impartiality. One way of solving their difficulty has been to distinguish between two Mores; the urbane and liberal scholar, and the narrow fanatic.

Bishop Burnet, writing at the end of the seventeenth century saw "the intoxicating charms" of More's religion as his evil genius. Under its influence "he came to muffle up his understanding and deliver himself as a property to the blind and enraged fury of the priests."<sup>1</sup> To prove this it is necessary to show that More's attitude towards tolerance changed fundamentally between his writing of *Utopia* and *The Dialogue Concerning Heretics*. As I have shown already, this proposition cannot be satisfactorily proved. In the eighteenth century Horace Walpole speaks indulgently of More as "that cruel judge whom one knows not how to hate, who persecuted others in defence of superstitions he had himself exposed."<sup>2</sup> His reference to superstition identified Walpole as a disciple of Bishop Burnet's. His willingness to excuse More's cruelty, however, suggests that he finds in him some understandable human failings, apparently a curious *naïveté*, which made him the hapless tool of Rome. Thus he salvages the reputation of the More of the pre-Reformation era, while More the scourge of Protestantism is repudiated.

When old prejudices were reawakened in the nineteenth

<sup>1</sup> *Life and Writings of Sir Thomas More*, by T. E. Bridgett (London, 1891).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

century by the Oxford Movement, the attitude of the Protestant historian towards More again stiffened. James Anthony Froude said, "There was in More a want of confidence in human nature, a scorn of the follies of his fellow-creatures, which, as he became more earnestly religious, narrowed and hardened his convictions, and transformed the genial philosopher into a merciless bigot."<sup>1</sup> Unlike Walpole, or even Bishop Burnet, Froude does not find the early and the later More in violent contradiction. He saw that a more plausible case could be made for More's fanaticism if it could be demonstrated that More had become a "merciless bigot" in the course of the natural development of his character. In the age of Newman, Froude saw clearly the danger to Protestant solidarity of allowing More a blameless reputation. In an effort to leave no doubt in the minds of his readers that his execution was a vindication of Protestant principles, Froude attacked the whole image of More more strongly than anyone before his time, including Foxe.

The methods which Froude used to destroy More's reputation are, however, strangely inept. He asserts that More duplicated "the worst iniquities of the Bishops" and begins documentation of this charge by affirming his unwillingness "to relate the stories of his cruelties in his house at Chelsea" described in the *Book of Martyrs*, but will cite instead "specific instances . . . on which the evidence is not open to question." He tells first the story of Thomas Philips, one of More's alleged victims; then he concedes that since More's role in that matter was at best "only secondary," some may think it "unjust to charge a good man's memory" on such slight grounds. Froude next puts forward the case of John Field. Here, he admits, "we can but form an imperfect judgment on the merits of the case, for we have only the sufferer's *ex parte* complaint, and More might probably have been able to make some counter-statement." Unable, after all, to make good his charges against More, Froude goes back on his word and rounds out his feeble account by producing a narrative of a heretic's torture at More's Chelsea house from Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, a source he has himself deplored as "open to question." Then, astonishingly, with nothing proved, Froude rests his case. His account is so entirely unsubstantiated, so pathetically inade-

<sup>1</sup> *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth*, by J. A. Froude.

quate, that today we find it hard to believe that Froude's readers were convinced that he had put together a case against More. His account reads like a parody of sound documentation. Yet Froude was completely serious and his readers, members of a society in which the *Book of Martyrs* was conceded an authority second only to that of Scripture itself, were just as serious in their acceptance of him.

Froude's failure to make his point in this particular instance should not be counted against his scholarship as a whole. Rhetorically he did the best he could; but his point was unmakeable. Although he must have realised this fact by the time he came to the end of his work, if not at the beginning, it is doubtful if this was ever a cause of embarrassment to him. Addressing readers already conditioned to accept the truth of the charges he was making, he could be confident that implications would weigh as heavily with them as the most positive evidence, and that they would supply from their imaginations what his account lacked in facts. His real aim was to demolish More's reputation, and this he completes with a pronouncement on More's early character based on sources so esoteric that they have never been disclosed.

More's canonisation in 1935 produced from Catholic scholars a spate of books and articles which brought under fresh scrutiny the circumstances of his life and death. For a time it seemed that the canonisation had dramatised the merits of his position so effectively that he had been finally vindicated. But the doubts planted by four centuries of adverse comment die hard. Thus Sir Maurice Powicke seems well-disposed towards More when he says: "He had both the power and the duty to take note of cases [of heresy] which were brought to his attention; and it was for the exercise of this authority, which he used more than once in well-intentioned and sometimes kindly efforts to persuade them of the error of their ways, that he was afterwards accused of being a persecutor of heretics."<sup>1</sup> But the phrase "sometimes kindly efforts" suggests that he is not altogether able to dismiss from his mind the memory of the old slanders. So it is not surprising to find him saying later: "Sir Thomas More was a dreamer, not reckoning enough with the untidy, disrespectful adventurousness in the spirit of man. He had no experience of the explosive power of conviction, whether it is right or wrong." Here again is

<sup>1</sup> *European Civilization: Its Origin and Development*, ed. E. Eyre (O.U.P., 1936).

Walpole's conception of Thomas More, only this time his *naïveté* is not merely hinted at but is pinpointed as his dramatic flaw. More, it seems, is to be excused on the grounds that he was a Laputan at heart, an impractical, well-meaning theorist who was unable to survive amidst the complexities of real life. Powicke's portrait of More is one that few Protestants would object to, in an age when the triumph of Protestantism in sixteenth-century England comes to matter less and less and is one that most Catholics could be brought to accept, in an age when the defeat of Catholicism at the Reformation comes to matter more and more. But Catholic scholarship, or for that matter any scholarship worthy of the name, cannot quite accept this version of More. Powicke has compassion for More. But More did nothing that called for such indulgence. Powicke does not admit the allegation that More was a "merciless bigot" is nonsense; he merely seems to agree to overlook it. In doing so, he implies that he does not think it refutable. Therefore he scarcely leaves More better off than his predecessors did. In one sense he leaves him worse off. In the past More's critics credited him with intelligence, even if they thought he had made a perverse use of it. Powicke's More is not merely narrow, he is stupid as well. Such a man may not be very wrong; he is not very right either. But Powicke's view of More has never been taken very seriously. It asks too much to suppose that a man who resigned the Lord Chancellorship of England rather than dishonour his conscience, who died for his beliefs rather than equivocate, could fail to know "the explosive power of conviction." No man in the whole of English history could illustrate it better with the example of his own life.

For four centuries More's adversaries have pitted against him the best arguments scholarship and religious indignation can produce. No saint ever had so many devil's advocates. It is now time to recognise in Professor Baker's comment on More that the opposition have sunk into complete bankruptcy. This becomes clear when in order to make his case, Professor Baker reverts to the broad and unfounded hostility of John Foxe, and by comparing More with Savonarola, tries the "guilt-by-association" technique. Now, perhaps, the excellence of Thomas More's mind and spirit will be allowed to stand unchallenged; or, if not, challenged only by those who envy goodness.



# NEWMAN AND VON HÜGEL

## *A Record of an Early Meeting*

By

R. K. BROWNE

A DECADE has passed since von Hügel's biographer wrote: "One would have expected that in these early years the influence of the great cardinal, standing as he did so high above his Catholic and Christian contemporaries, so original and generous in his spiritual perceptions, and, after all, personally known both to the baron and to his wife, would have been paramount. If so, there is no evidence of the fact, and it is certainly clear that any strong influence felt at the time did not endure. There are surprisingly few references to Newman in the baron's writings, and these few usually sound a critical note."<sup>1</sup>

It is now possible to throw a little more light on the question of Newman's influence on the younger man. A notebook<sup>2</sup> preserved in St. Andrews University Library contains an account of subjects discussed when von Hügel visited Newman in 1876—a visit which the Baron described as leaving a permanent mark upon him.

It is not clear when von Hügel first met Newman. An entry in the latter's diary for 3 August 1869 reads: "the two de Hügels called." If this refers, as Fr. Dessain believes, to Friedrich and his brother Anatole, it may have been this visit which led the young Friedrich to begin reading Newman. He himself says that he did so "at 17½," i.e., on a rigidly arithmetical interpretation, three months after this.

Unfortunately, few of von Hügel's letters to Newman have survived. He certainly wrote soon after his marriage in November 1873, but it was more than a year later (13 December 1874) that

<sup>1</sup> M. de la Bedoyere, *The Life of Baron von Hügel*, London, 1951, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Thanks are due to Baron von Hügel's daughter for permission to print these transcripts from her father's notebook, to the Library Committee of St. Andrews University, the owners of the notebook, and to the Very Rev. C. S. Dessain for making available photostats of the Baron's letters and supplying helpful information.

he wrote a letter which made so deep an impression on Newman that he kept it:

. . . I can't keep myself from at last coming out with one of the many things I hoped some day to be able to tell you, on my return to England and coming to Birmingham. It is how deeply, profoundly indebted I am to you, for all you have been to me by means of your books. The reading of "Loss and Gain," "the Apologia," "Anglican Difficulties" and "the Grammar of Assent" has, at different times and in different ways formed distinct epochs in my young intellectual and religious life. Such intellectual discipline as I have had, I owe it to your books. They have I hope, made up to me, at least somewhat, for the absence in my youthful years of any systematic training, any systematic and reliable teacher. I have no doubt I might have profited by them even more, nor have I any doubt that mine is but one out of hundreds of similar cases, and yet I hope to have won from you a permanent possession, and gratitude will out at last, anyhow. Both before, and especially since my marriage I have looked forward to going to Birmingham, and trespassing upon a few of your spare moments, as almost too fair a dream ever to be realized, and although I will and cannot give up the hope of eventually doing so, yet I cannot, either, keep in any longer this much of my say. Will you, dear Father Newman, kindly forgive the above, and also be indulgent to what follows? It has been one of my earliest and most lasting ambitions eventually to receive even the least of your writings from yourself, and I have worked myself up, at last, to the pitch of testing your kindness by writing so brazen a thing.

We have read most of the newspaper criticisms on, and answers to, Mr. Gladstone. I suppose his pamphlet is a good thing, inasmuch as it is the occasion of the question being thoroughly discussed and sifted. But I for one, and all who will read you with me, must I am sure be grateful to him for making you take up your pen. I need not say how eagerly, almost feverishly, I am looking forward to the publication of your reply. I have no doubt, that it, like your other books, will be to me a fresh starting point, intellectually, and an additional link in the chain of the many helps and enlightenments that bind me to you. . . .

Newman's pleasure is evident in his reply of 15 January 1875.

It seems very ungrateful in me to have kept silence, after so very kind a letter from you—one of the most pleasant and gratifying that I had ever had. I thank you for it with all my heart—and trust you have attributed my apparent negligence to the right cause, the

close application that I have been giving to my answer to Mr. Gladstone, which has been a great anxiety to me. I hope Fr. St. John in his letter explained this to you. All I can do in the way of amends is to beg your and the Baroness's acceptance of a copy<sup>1</sup> of my publication, which I shall send by this post.

I am very much pleased at the prospect of seeing you here at some time—and then I shall be too much honoured by being allowed to offer you any of my volumes you like to name.

It is a great consolation to an old man to be told that his writings have been of service to any of the younger generation, especially to those who have a foremost place in it. . . .

The Gladstone controversy must have been of special interest to von Hügel. The statesman had apparently disapproved of Lady Mary Herbert's conversion and her marriage to the Baron. Von Hügel attempted his own answer to one of Gladstone's points. As far as is known it was never published but it was shown to Gladstone, who dismissed it as learned but irrelevant.<sup>2</sup>

It was more than a year before active preparations began for the long-awaited visit. Then delays arose. In April 1876 it had to be postponed because the Baroness was unwell. Then in May Newman found that a long standing engagement made a further postponement necessary. Von Hügel must have begun to think that his dream was definitely never to be realised. Finally, however, on 13 June 1876, Newman's diary reads, "Baron & Baroness von Hügel came."

They appear to have stayed for a week. Von Hügel records conversations with Newman on the 14th, 16th and 18th, and with Fr. Ryder on the 19th. The 15th, be it noted, was Corpus Christi. It is tempting to speculate and it is, at least, not botanically impossible, for spring came late in Birmingham that year, that this visit was the occasion when Newman took the younger man "to the Botanical Gardens, all gloriously abloom with rhododendrons and azaleas, and as he dived in and out behind and around the plants, full of ecstasies of admiration, he exclaimed: 'But what argument could the Evolutionists bring against this as evidence of the work of Mind?'"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This copy, inscribed by Newman, is preserved in St. Andrews University Library.

<sup>2</sup> A manuscript copy, with Gladstone's reply, occupies four pages of the notebook from which the extracts printed here are taken.

<sup>3</sup> F. von Hügel, *The Reality of God and Religion and Agnosticism*, London, 1931, p. 54.



These "Talks with Fr. Newman," as von Hügel himself calls them, although it appears that Newman did all the talking or that the Baron's share in the conversation was not recorded, are printed exactly as written, with two minor alterations. A number of obvious abbreviations have been silently expanded and one or two paragraphs which von Hügel indicated should be transposed have been placed in their correct order. A few errors of punctuation and syntax have been left uncorrected. It would have been possible to have added an impressive array of footnotes linking almost every phrase with one or other of Newman's published works, but this would have been otiose for the Newman specialist and irritating to the general reader. Footnotes have, therefore, been kept to a minimum.

One note of caution must be sounded. The voice of Newman can clearly be heard in these talks, but it is quite possible that here and there we do not get his considered opinions or that von Hügel, who was already beginning to be afflicted with deafness, may occasionally have misrepresented him. The pages that follow are valuable as indicating the subjects of mutual interest to these two great men rather than as definitive contributions to these subjects.

## MY TALK WITH FR. NEWMAN, June 14, 1876

### I. About the vicariousness of Our Lord's suffering.

Theologians distinguish between two kinds of vicariousness—of the *thing* as in paying of debts and of the *person* as when a judge orders a man's hand to be chopped off and another offers himself in his stead. Our Lord's vicariousness is certainly not of the first sort nor is it even strictly speaking of the second for God need not have exacted any punishment for sin—Our Lord who knew all things prayed in the garden that the cup might pass from Him, showing thereby that He need not have drunk it—and indeed why He did so is as much a mystery as sin itself. One explanation of it makes Our Lord suffer to impress mankind with the awfulness of sin, just as Seleucus, having made a law that any one of his subjects committing adultery should have both his eyes put out, when his son did it—put out one of his son's eyes and one of his own.

## 2. On possibility of invincible ignorance in matters of natural religion.

All theologians agree that this is possible though they differ as to where to draw the line. Some, like Ward, would deny the possibility of invincible ignorance as to the being of a God; others with Fr. Newman hold it possible. Dr. Ullathorne has told him that out in Australia he has met with whole tribes to whom the idea of a God was quite foreign and in China the Jesuit missionaries have had the greatest difficulty in finding a word to express the idea of God. The Bible Society has—in its Chinese bibles—to express the word God by Heavens. Men may be responsible for having got into a depraved mental condition and yet cease to be responsible for their individual intellectual acts. As to individuals such as W. F.<sup>1</sup> we can only leave them to God and to the Last Day, so impossible is it to know their lights and their difficulties.

So also as to the Ten Commandments. Different individuals vary considerably as to the class of offences to which their conscience is sensitive. With most of us there are blanks and breaks in our consciences and indeed to strengthen and enlighten these is one of the principal offices of revelation. Still the majority of sins are committed wilfully and with knowledge as with children who steal sugar knowing perfectly well that it is wrong to do so. Individuals are so different that they cannot know each other—they do not know their own selves—but popular theology cannot take notice of the necessary exceptions and limitations to its principles and rules.

## 3. As to Certainty.

I cannot see my way to any absolute tests of false certainty and true. I quite see that this is the weak point of "the Grammar." I do not say there is no answer to this difficulty but it is beyond me. I wish I could have done better but I know of no one else who has. I have shown that true certainties do exist and that there is a difference between true and false ones but besides my three general rules<sup>2</sup> I can find nothing to help in discriminating

<sup>1</sup> Presumably Newman's friend William Froude at whom the *Grammar of Assent* was in great part aimed.

<sup>2</sup> "It seems then that on the whole there are three conditions of certitude: that it follows on investigation and proof, that it is accompanied by a specific sense of intellectual satisfaction and repose, and that it is irreversible." *Grammar of Assent*, 1870, p. 258.

them. We can but trust that a certainty which has borne the test of time is a true one, and that God does not choose us to know more.

#### 4. Scholastic Philosophy.

I myself have often heard it said that Scholastic Philosophy is losing ground, but I cannot see it. St. Thomas is wonderful in the way in which he sifts and sorts reasons and objections for you, so that you have only to choose among them for yourself. He doesn't care for the Scholastic method of reasoning; the syllogism ignores the more and less and yet in moral evidence this is often the most important consideration. You fritter away your best and most effective arguments by stating them in the syllogistic form. Evidence is merely the material used by the mind in an act of certainty. There are no conclusions against which arguments may not be brought; *i.e.* the Darwinian theory can take possession of the imagination and be a very plausible objection to the being of a God.

As to such scholastic terms as have come to be mixed up with definitions—such as that of Transubstantiation—they only, as it were, express a truth in a particular language and the truth can be expressed in another. Bellarmine uses the words cause and effects instead of substance and accidents. But I do not pretend to be a metaphysician—quite the reverse; so much of metaphysics seems to me playing about with words; I cannot thoroughly get hold of it.

### Talk on June 16th

#### I. As to Certainty.

As to the difficulties of arriving at certainty while the evidence is but an accumulation of probabilities, I would observe that we act similarly in practical matters; *e.g.* what evidence is producible for my belief in the fidelity of a friend, or for my certainty that I will one day die or that Great Britain is an island? In all these cases I am certain and yet the evidence only gives me a high degree of probability. As to the being of a God, though I hold it firmly and there is evidence sufficient for my so doing, yet I would find it difficult to demonstrate it to an unbeliever. In fact you cannot well prove it for another but each mind has to prove it for itself; it is part of its mental discipline. Those who hold that certain arguments will do for everybody find that

their theory will not work. At one time I should have been inclined to consider my theory as lax but now I have no doubt of its orthodoxy. Amort<sup>1</sup> certainly held less than I do, and yet his book was dedicated to Benedict XIV. Franzelin has shown himself disposed towards my view.

A thousand objections don't make a doubt; if an objection is sufficient to constitute a doubt, we will never cease doubting. Men get themselves into a sceptical habit until they doubt of everything; like Mill, who seems to have been ready to doubt of his own existence, which is really a *reductio ad absurdum* of his whole position. The question is not as to whether my view is dangerous or not; many truths are exceedingly dangerous; but whether it is true or not. People forget that the objects of faith are facts not arguments, and we must get such of the latter as will be agreed to by the greater number. It is one thing to be satisfied of a truth oneself and another to convince others of it. And when men are shocked at my admitting difficulties in demonstrating the being of a God, they only prove that the action of unbelief has not got sufficiently deep down into them.

2. As to the difficulty that the Church's infallible teaching has to pass through a fallible medium before arriving at the individual soul. This is a case where we have to distinguish between infallibility and certainty; though neither Ward nor I are infallible yet we can be and are certain as to individual points of the Church's teaching. In the broad and as to decided points we will be found to be in agreement; in unsettled matters of detail we have each our own view. And though Ward may insist that I will declare some points open which are really settled, yet even here the rule holds good that when there are two *sets* of theologians with conflicting views, the individual has a right to hold the laxer view. As in moral theology; St. Alphonso holds it allowable to equivocate in certain circumstances; the Dominican theologians are stricter and hold that you may not. And yet a Dominican might not in the confessional press his own view on the penitent; the latter has a right to the laxer view. The Jesuits teach that where the confessor insists upon his view the penitent

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius Amort (1692-1775), a voluminous writer on theological and philosophical subjects. His *Demonstratio critica religionis catholicae nova, modesta, facilis* . . . , Venice, 1744, was dedicated to Benedict XIV. See *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 411, 412.

has a right to a fresh discussion on the subject with another confessor. I know that Ward would sometimes oblige Catholics to hold his opinions; but who is he? It is so exceedingly bumptious of him.

### Talk on June 18th

#### 1. Infallibility

As to the necessity of moral unanimity in a Council. Fr. Newman said that now the Pope's infallibility was defined it was really an obsolete question. But that he considered it necessary, only that it would require a very resolute and active opposition to invalidate it. Though in some of the earlier councils the proceedings ended in the opposing parties excommunicating each other, yet a short time would suffice to bring about an understanding and show that there had been a virtual unanimity all along. In the Council of the Vatican too, though there was an opposition, yet it kept not together nor showed itself in any way as the representative of a national religious tradition, so as to throw doubts on the general acceptance of the doctrine of the majority.

As to the Popes' decisions in early times, they were not called infallible but irreformable and though of course they would not be the latter without being also the former, yet it is by no means clear that the Popes were more than merely conscious of being certain and in the right as to each individual decision as it came to be pronounced.

#### 2. Temporal Power.

It has got about that I am against it but this is not the case. I have only ever felt a strong objection to pledging the Church to its maintenance. The Bishops told the Pope so and the Pope said that it was not a question of faith. Nor is it. We know that for a thousand years it has pleased God to give the Popes temporal power; I would not speak against it, for we cannot know what God's will concerning it is, but I consider it very dangerous to argue as if the Church could not possibly get on without it. One of the great arguments in favour of the Pope's principedom was that he got it from the people and got maintained in it by the people, but the modern Romans seem not to care to have the



Pope; had they shown any fight against the Sardinians all Englishmen would have been for them; but they did not and you cannot keep up a sovereignty against the will of the people. The feeling of indignation against the Sardinians is very natural; they are thieves and robbers. Dupanloup's being so strong for the temporal power and yet opposed to the definition of infallibility is but the keeping up of the French tradition from the days of Bossuet who was strongly for the temporal power while he went against the infallibility. The Jesuits though moderate on other points are very determined on this one.

By way of epilogue it is sufficient to print the words of von Hügel himself, when on 18 August 1890 he wrote to condole with Fr. Ryder on the Cardinal's death:

... I think I may give myself the relief of telling you a little of my great debt of gratitude towards the great one you and we all have lost, and of explaining how much I should have liked to have asked to be allowed to attend tomorrow, did I not knock up for days after any such exertion.

It was at 17½ that I first had any book of the Cardinal's in my hand; and "Loss and Gain" was the first book which, amidst abnormal circumstances within and without, made me realize the intellectual might and grandeur of the Catholic position. Ever since then—especially during the ten years after that—my debt to him has been steadily, during that period rapidly, on the increase; and, if I am now less conscious of such growth than I was then, that is owing, I have no doubt, to my having assimilated so much of the five Lectures of Part II on Anglican Difficulties; of the Parochial and Plain Sermons; of the Letters to Dr. Pusey and the Duke of Norfolk; above all, of the "Grammar of Assent,"—that I talk Newman even oftener than I know!

With how many this must be the case! We can all in our measure say of him, what Goethe says of Schiller:

*Schon längst verbreitet sich's in ganze Schaaren,  
Das Eigenste, was ihm allein gehört.  
Er glänzt uns vor, wie ein Komet verschwiegend,  
Unendlich Licht mit seinem Licht verbindend.<sup>1</sup>*

I suspect that this is the true explanation of the apparent disproportion between his magnificent endowments and their lavish

<sup>1</sup> *Epilog zu Schillers Glocke.* "The individual genius which was his alone, had long diffused itself through the whole throng. He blazed before us, vanishing like a comet, blending eternal light with his own."

use on the one hand and the tangible results on the other: that, in fact, the results have been and are too general and far-reaching, too secret and deep to be thus tangible and self-evident to a generation bathed in and penetrated by them.

But he was not only an influence upon me through his books: his letters and the visit he let me pay him at your Oratory have all left their permanent mark upon me—as indeed they could not fail to do. And there are many near and dear to me for whom I know he did at least as much as for myself.

I can do so little in return; but my twelve Communion next after the 11th inst. have been and will be all for him. . . .

This letter perhaps holds the key to the problem with which we began. Von Hügel had assimilated so much of Newman so thoroughly that by the time he published his own major works he was no longer conscious of his debt. It remains for some future scholar to make an exhaustive study of von Hügel's writings in the light of Newman's influence in order to reveal just how great this debt was.

## THE DIARY OF MARIE NOËL

By

ELLA BERG

TO THE ONE-VOLUME EDITION of the *Poesies* of Marie Noël, to her *Contes*, stories and touching reminiscences of childhood (*Petit Jour*), have been added important extracts from her private diary.<sup>1</sup> These make the best possible commentary on her work, of which they are the complement and the explanation.

The selection is not made from unpublished matter. In his substantial biography of Marie Noël, *La Neige Qui Brûle*, M. Raymond Escholier had already drawn from this source. In addition

<sup>1</sup> Mme. Ella Berg has, by her translations, introduced Marie Noël to the Scandinavian public. The reception has been enthusiastic. In this article Mme. Berg analyses the central theme of Marie Noël's life as it is revealed in her recently published diary.

some magazines have provided us with a first look at certain passages.

The daily confession which forms the substance of this diary is devoid of anything sensational since it reflects a sedentary monotonous life, almost that of a prisoner. But her examination of conscience, always scrupulously precise, often reflects a real interior struggle. A. Blanchet was able to say "It is one of the truest books that I know."<sup>1</sup>

Still waters are often dangerous and the calm of a peaceful existence, quite insignificant to all appearances, conceals more often than one would think, unbelievable interior storms. The attraction of opposites? Rather the disappearance of those diversions denounced by Pascal which turn the spirit away from reflection and from the dramatic contemplation of human destiny.

A not too robust health and a paralysing filial piety—something the devotees of Françoise Sagan could not even imagine—have long confined Marie Noël in a clearly limited space—the banks of the Yonne and the hills of the Puisaye. But it is in the unlimited regions of the moral world that she moves. Tortured by doubt, a legacy from her father, an agnostic of the university, she clung to the faith after agonising struggles.

The profound realism of some of the comments which flow from her pen remind me of the sudden flashes of the greatest moralists. Bremond's remark after reading a few of her poems is well-known, "Resign yourself to it, Mademoiselle, you have a touch of genius."

At the end of the *Notes Intimes* which are arranged chronologically, there is an alphabetical index which allows the reader to refer to the different places where particular authors are cited or particular questions treated. This index is invaluable. The central theme of the work is the struggle against doubt made possible by the living dynamism of the Christian spirit.

Original sin, was it really a mortal sin? Marie Noël wonders. Was it a conscious sin? Thereupon she grows indignant at the cruelty of the Creator and rises in rebellion against the law of the jungle—(to be is the will to possess, and in order to possess, the will to destroy him who possesses)—against sufferings which seem undeserved, against iniquity, hate, misery, sickness. Death besieges us from the cradle. He lays hands even on innocent

<sup>1</sup> *Etudes*, Feb. 1960.



children. Once our transitory stay here below has reached its term, death leads us perhaps to the discovery of a future life, but after so many trials which seem as purposeless as they are bitter.

This doubt worms its way into the torments of the soul and its despair. There it sows its deadly seed. With our beliefs crumbling, are we to put an end to our days as a means of flight? That would be a trap, if one were to kill only the body. The soul would remain eternally filled with remorse. Unless of course nothingness makes the "beyond" which we still imagine collapse "like a castle of clouds." Wandering about amongst these sterile hypotheses, doubt remains nonetheless as a "dark adoration"; it is still a grace despite the indecision in which it leaves us to stagnate, since it keeps us in a serene unbelief. Whilst the reunion of Christian Churches is in the news, it is of the greatest interest to the Protestant world that a voice, which Catholics recognise, is raised in favour of free discussion and exposes frankly the attacks over which the faith finally prevails. Belief is not in fact the result of a cowardly abdication, once and for all, of the critical mind, but comes very often from a long incubation. It is an unceasing and often heroic conquest, an adherence which is perpetually in danger. The sceptic is wrong when he thinks that he alone is the prey of the torturing spectre of nothingness.

To scrupulous souls, daily life affords but feeble consolation amidst the terrors of uncertainty. Furthermore, the Marxist vision lays down the postulate of an absolute materialism. The world runs the risk of changing into an ant-hill. Will the individual disappear, as certain sociologists predict, stripped of his personality, reduced to the role of a mere standardised cog in a society where everything is divided beyond all reason into compartments? It would be and indeed is even now almost "the street without joy."

... in the city of the future, a street where the multiple cables of human science cross and intertwine, a street without a sky, prisoner of the smoky daylight at roof level; a street precisely industrious and regulated attending without room to move to tasks without light.

The superlative, I imagine, of this new China whose propaganda with its counterfeit statistics fascinates the under-developed negroes. How right Francis Jammes was to live far from urban centres. How these *agrovilles* would offend him. The countryside bristles with artificial trees, poles with hideous clusters of porcelain cups.

With all their snugness, the interiors of provincial houses are, on the other hand, invaded by neighbours who drop in to have a chat. Politely one pretends to listen to their insipid remarks. These irritating people interrupt dreams and work in the most detestable manner.

Finally, the family cell, in the penal sense given by Gide to the word, means irksome routine. At every moment the free development of the life of the spirit is checked. Out of respect one dare not kick against the goad. The days pass—"family colour"—according to the clear-sighted expression of the author. A caged canary: such more often than not was the lot, fifty years ago, of a well-bred girl, "swaddled in obedience."

If only the practice of religion would allow the captive spirit to take wing occasionally like the lark of the meadows warbling its way to its zenith. But it is often difficult to walk with good grace behind the drums of Good; to fill one's money-box with nice little good deeds; to respect ecclesiastics who look like game-keepers. All cannot resemble Abbé Mugnier, Abbé Bremond, Père Blanchet!

In this context, a little after the fashion of Paul Claudel vigorously deploring what he called "the Mass backwards way round," that is to say, with the celebrant facing the people, Marie Noël reproves the vulgarities of an over-progressist liturgy which, under the pretext of adaptation to existing conditions, does not even recognise the most venerable traditions. All this backed up by commentaries in the vernacular, the reverberations of loudspeakers and improvised noise on the organ, in expectation no doubt, of the use of searchlights. What a change that is from the blue of the stained glass of Chartres! How it rouses nostalgia for the hymns handed down from long past ages.

Anxieties, disappointments, depression, disgust rouse Marie Noël, in an attempted escape from the platitudes of her banal surroundings, to seek solitude, be it only in the night where the stars tremble with cold. The cloister, which is a necessity for contemplatives, is not available for obedient children who, like Mlle. Rouget<sup>1</sup>, continue after their coming of age to live with their parents. But seclusion is necessary for a writer. That is often difficult to obtain in the cramped setting of a modest homestead. So it is that the word "alone," according to the analysis of the

<sup>1</sup> That is the authoress' name; Marie Noël is but a pseudonym.

frequency of verbal usages, occurs often in the poems of Marie Noël. The word haunts her. Once attained, solitude brings on a sort of intoxication, but like every intoxication, it only lasts a brief time.

The inconveniences of a prolonged retreat to one who is not constantly guided by mystical asceticism are not slow to appear. The desires of an affectionate heart inevitably provoke sufferings. The tragic reality of isolation described by Estaunié leads to the silent drama of the timid Anna Bargeton, heroine of a story dear to the author, a reminiscence no doubt of some personal grief. The "need to rest her forehead on a living shoulder," the sight, in a linen cupboard, of a "marriage bed sheet" embroidered in vain, sharpen the piercing regrets of a deeply feminine nature, loving and left alone. Even more than that it is a "cancer of the heart."

Marie Noël is sensitive in the highest degree. First of all because she is very intelligent, and secondly because her repressed feelings are irritated by her lack of boldness. Involved in a tenuous love affair which ends abruptly because she does not dare explain herself, Anna Bargeton, silent, affectionate, unhappy, falls back on her interior life without knowing the expansiveness of the joys of this world.

In the search for humility, the spirit is refined. Marie Noël tries to emphasise her imperfections. She speaks of her "concealed malice." She puts her readers on their guard against the contagion of her doubts. She tells us that she has succeeded in attenuating the sharp edges of her youth. In those days she was quick to find out weaknesses in her neighbours, and distress them by her malicious darts. She has succeeded in casting away the "stones" with which the field of her thoughts was strewn. She concludes that it is essential "not to seem to be," that is to say, to get rid of self and its vanities, in order to seem quite ordinary. One must drown one's own individual song in the common hum; content oneself with being the humble earthenware pot which contains the living water: all the qualities which God has given us.

There is no real humility without these treasures of patience to patch oneself up as it were spiritually. Hardly is the consciousness of our own value repulsed, when back it comes at the gallop. Nor is there any genuine charity or authentic love of our fellow-men without a constant drawing on all our reserves of longanimity.

Such disinterestedness is not inspired by a morality founded on the materialism of the eighteenth-century encyclopedists.

To find happiness one must practise the Christian virtues and accept the demands of work. God smiles on the latter. It is equivalent to prayer. In order to hear the voice from on high we must accept ourselves as God has made us. He who plays the angel runs the risk of yielding to the temptations of the evil one. The self-indulgence recommended by St. Francis de Sales is suitable for the unassuming Christian who does not know the arrogance of certain privations. Commenting on a note from the Abbé Mugnier which reminds her that one must renounce nothing that is ennobling, especially one's feelings, and that one must accept the complexity of life, Marie Noël writes,

Accept oneself, imperfect, sometimes half a saint, sometimes half guilty, with the unceasing stirrings of shade and light which make up a living soul. One must not exhaust oneself by wanting to be too pure. The best and most nourishing souls are made up of a few great radiating goodnesses and a thousand hidden little wretchednesses on which that goodness sometimes feeds, like the wheat which lives on the rottenness of the soil.

A deliberate short-sightedness about the weeds which sprout in us should not at the same time hide from us that we are in duty bound to use to the best the gifts we received at birth. When we come to be judged we shall be reproached with having neglected them. "We must . . . achieve . . . all the good and the beautiful of which we are capable whilst we are still capable of it."

The artist and the poet will find their happiness in the creative work for which they are gifted. Descended, on her mother's side, from Auvergnat stone-cutters, Marie Noël sings spontaneously, doubtless just as they did at each blow of the mallet on the chisel. Her songs stifle her cries of rebellion. Her "hunger for heaven" wins the day when reason and love are at war within her. Her faith thus triumphs over doubt and this triumph fills her with joy:

My whole life will have been nothing but a battle between reason and love. Each time love wins a luminous joy is born within me. Each time understanding wins it is a despairing calm. And each of these victories is a victory of God. Love is God, intelligence is God. Not two Gods. Only One . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> p. 137.

The plurality of God donning alike intelligence and love! This way of looking at the divine nature is not in the least contrary to monotheism. When the Church teaches us the mystery of the Holy Trinity, she does not tell us, but perhaps we may imagine it, that for each of the three divine Persons there are corresponding individual nuances, which are in no way opposed to their fundamental blending; no more than the co-existence in us of volitional, affective, and intellectual faculties breaks up the unity of the individual which is each of us. Marie Noël puts her one hope in God, "light without countenance." She delights in looking on him as the supreme point where the parallel lines of Good and Evil join together. He is the Conciliator, good, but defying definition since He is infinite. Dominating beyond all measure the sanctity of the blessed who are raised to the altars, He knows how to link fantasy with order, a game with the law.

The Seraphim are His work, but so is the butterfly. His work, too, the heavens, stars, obedience of the planets, but so are fire, wind, the capricious clouds.

He plays with flowers. He has invented for amusement (if not for that, then why at all?) squirrels' tails, the peacock's feathers, swan's feet, the elephant's trunk, the humps on the camel and the dromedary. And if He takes pleasure—perhaps—in a holy monk taking the discipline at night whilst being tempted, He also blesses with a smile the dancing kid . . .

The point of view is original and poetic. This definition of God gives a unity of direction to the thoughts of Marie Noël. It contains the essence of the spiritual message addressed to her sisters by a troubled soul who has recovered her self-possession. In spite of our misunderstanding, our weakness, our faults, our rebellion, God remains sovereign forgiveness.

To discover or re-discover Him, grace is necessary. But for the non-jansenists it is not sufficient. What is needed is a movement of the will, a sudden spring. It is not enough to pray. An ardent desire is indispensable. Let us think of the two ends of that famous chain about which Bossuet speaks. Liberty and predestination, apparently irreconcilable, but not only do they not exclude each other, they are complementaries. To be free—surely that means adapting oneself, of one's own free will, to the divine will. In the wretchedness of our condition, this share in the creation of ourselves, which is allotted to us by the possibility of being able



to choose between good and evil, and the responsibility for our actions, raise up our puny person and allow it to escape being crushed beneath materialistic determinism. But in the quest for God, we must not rest content, once again, in the acknowledgement that what is Him is desirable. When despair prowls around us, and temptation, we must stand our ground in order to obtain the grace which will carry us on in gladness: the grace of faith.

Often a long period of waiting is required before the seed really germinates. The case of Paul Claudel is well-known: standing near the pillar in Notre-Dame, thunderstruck by the Ineffable, and yet only coming to the practice of religion after many years of meditation and reading.

On the other hand, Marie Noël also describes for us the sudden and lasting return of peace after a shattering upset. She reveals one of the religious crises she went through and tells us about the agony it caused:

I had nothing in the whole world but God. Not so much on account of my piety as on account of my utter loneliness. Had I known the affection of a man, the hand of a little child, I would have turned away and given my whole attention elsewhere . . . Often doubts hovered around like birds of menace. They used to pass on . . .<sup>1</sup>

A word of her father about the survival of the soul threw her into a turmoil:

God crumbled to pieces. For three days and three nights I tried to rebuild him . . . In vain I pored over the books which have revealed Him to us . . . For three long days, a desperate battle, sweating in vain to resurrect God, to save Him. Agony, obsession . . . Razor-edged lucidity which extinguishes all illuminations one after another. Cries from the soul, cries day and night, cries behind my words, cries in the empty church, cries during my fruitless communions . . . sacrilegious perhaps . . . and even sacrilege could have been hope! . . . The night of the third day, the damned soul was desperately kissing a last cross, . . . Abruptly, the darkness rolled back, the circle of anguish broke. I reeled . . . deliverance. Joy. Praise. I was singing . . . I danced . . . Was I in a state of living grace or had I merely got a fever of the spirit? I do not know . . . I do not need to know . . . God knows.

<sup>1</sup> *L'enfer des Trois Jours*, p. 102.



Seven years were to pass before Marie Noël was again beset by such a struggle. Hope remained as her guiding star through the fleeting darkness. François Mauriac<sup>1</sup> pays homage to her heroic and preserving fight against scepticism: "with neither wimple nor veil, she had pushed ahead along a certain road, going further perhaps than she herself ever knew." Like the little St. Teresa of Lisieux, she went through the formidable trial of dryness. But she held on stubbornly during "the terrible hour when God is not true." And in a spirit of partial renunciation of the world she still kept on loving him. Whilst destroying her own instinct for violence and rebellion she allowed herself to be tamed by the unyielding gentle kindness of Christ. This it was which "whispered to her the pure songs with which it soothes His suffering and ours."

An unexpected death has brought to mind the particular public addressed by a well-known writer harassed by doubt.<sup>2</sup> He had not yet discovered the cracks in nihilism. Walking along the edge of the precipice he portrayed vividly the vertigo which takes possession of him who looks down into the depths. The absurdity of the world, according to him destroys any reason for believing in the after-life. Preparing the way for the *blousons noirs*, *ligister*, and all the other "teddy-boys," whose sombre exploits betray the same disillusion, a youth thrown off its balance by the horrors of the last war, saw in the disastrous appraisal contained in a brilliant but ice-cold view of the world, the echo of its own disappointment, disgust and despondency. In complete contrast, Marie Noël, untouched by the consequences of this new *mal du siècle*, turns her eyes towards heaven. There she finds, with the reason for keeping her balance and the balance that comes from reason, the meaning of life and peace of soul.

<sup>1</sup> *Figaro Littéraire*, 2 Janvier 1960.

<sup>2</sup> The sudden death of Albert Camus.

# GALILEO AND THE JESUIT'S WATERCLOCK

By

CONOR REILLY

THE CONDEMNATION of Galileo in 1633 was a tragedy. This we can recognise not alone in the often depicted scene of the trembling old man on his knees, reading his recantation, or in the serious harm done to the Church by an unwise decision of her Holy Office, but also, and perhaps most movingly of all, in Galileo's failure to produce even one undeniable argument for the truth of the Copernican system. He was personally convinced of its truth and had much converging evidence in his favour, but in spite of the demands of his critics and the urgings of his friends, he failed to establish his position with certainty. In his *Dialogue of the Two Great World Systems* he proposed four proofs. Three of these, suggestive rather than apodictic, were based on the moons of Jupiter, the phases of Venus and the sunspots. The fourth proof he reserved, as a clinching argument, for the fourth and last day of his dialogue. This was his argument from the motion of the tides. Galileo held that the daily rise and fall of the tides was due to the motion of the revolving earth as it circled the sun. It was a clever and carefully worked out argument: unfortunately, it was false, and Galileo was left at the end of his *Dialogue* with his astronomical system still an hypothesis, still not established with certainty.

The muttered words *Eppur si muove*, attributed to Galileo as he rose from his knees after the recantation, are most probably the invention of an admiring chronicler, nevertheless, they do represent his mind in the years following his condemnation. He might be forbidden to write about the Copernican system or even to discuss it with those who visited him in his confinement at Arcetri, but it is clear from his correspondence and from the comments of his friends that he was as convinced as ever of the truth of the doctrine. If only, he felt, he could find an unanswerable argument, an undeniable proof for the Copernican system,

then the Church would be obliged to withdraw her condemnation. In 1635, less than two years after his recantation, there seemed to be hope that such a proof had been found. Most wonderful of all, the proof was the work of those who could not be accused of being prejudiced in Galileo's favour, the Jesuits.

Nicolas Claude Fabri de Peiresc, Councillor of the Parlement at Aix, patron of science and a distinguished scholar in his own right, was one of Galileo's friends. Though he sympathised with Galileo in his troubles and seemed to agree with him in assigning to the Jesuits a fair share of the blame for the condemnation, he did not break off his contacts with his scientific friends in the Order. He hoped that by his mediation he might be able to bring about a reversal of the condemnation, or at least a rehearing of the case. Now, at last, it seemed he was in a position in which he could utilise his Jesuit contacts to help the old prisoner of the Inquisition.

De Peiresc had read in a book, *De Symbolis Heroicis* by Silvester Petra Sancta, a Jesuit of the Roman College, of a remarkable *horologium hydraulicum*, or waterclock, which had been invented by another Jesuit, Francis Line, professor at the College of the English Jesuits at Liège. The *horologium* consisted of a metal sphere which floated freely in a hemispherical basin of water. The sphere, according to Petra Sancta's account, rotated at a regular rate throughout the day in such a way that a marker fixed to the rim of the basin indicated the hours of the day on a scale marked on the surface of the sphere. Petra Sancta during a visit to Liège, while serving as confessor to Mgr. Caraffa, Papal Nuncio at Cologne, had inspected the instrument and discussed it with its inventor.

De Peiresc was excited by the possibilities he saw in the invention. Could not an analogy be drawn between the freely-floating sphere, revolving once in every twenty-four hours, and the world, suspended in space, rotating on its axis? If the principles controlling the motion of the *horologium* could be discovered, might not a parallel be drawn between them and the daily flux and reflux of the ocean tides? Of course, such a proof would apply directly only to the daily rotation of the world, but to establish even that against the victorious fixed-earth theory would be a noteworthy advance.

Unfortunately in his book, which treated mainly of emblems,

Petra Sancta did no more than describe Line's *horologium*. He did not explain its working nor advance any theories as to its principles of operation. It was unfortunate, too, that de Peiresc had missed a chance of getting first-hand information from Petra Sancta. Mgr. Caraffa and his confessor had actually visited de Peiresc while on their return journey from Flanders to Rome, but in the excitement of the occasion, they had forgotten to speak of the invention. Now, with his realisation of what it might mean for his friend Galileo, de Peiresc intended to make amends for his lapse. He wrote post haste to Cardinal Francis Barberini, another of his friends, asking him to send for Petra Sancta and question him about the *horologium*. He also wrote to Mgr. Caraffa asking for full information. Caraffa had examined the instrument carefully and had noted that it was an accurate time-piece. Even these two sources of information did not satisfy him, and he sent queries to several other friends in Flanders, among them the painter Peter Paul Rubens, an acquaintance of Line's.

It was in an atmosphere of hope that de Peiresc wrote an account of all these happenings to Galileo on 1 April 1635.<sup>1</sup> He recounted all he had heard about the *horologium hydraulicum* and his efforts to obtain further information. His letter bubbles over with enthusiasm, both at the thought of finding a new proof for the Copernican system, "a testimony fallen from heaven into the hands of a Jesuit Father," and also with his determination to keep on working for a rehearing of Galileo's case, until such time as he is either successful or "silence is imposed upon me." How fortunate it would be, he wrote, if this testimony could be used "to demonstrate the error of those who find such repugnance in the Copernican doctrine and in what you proposed on the matter by way of a problematic exercise." Galileo would hardly have agreed, at least in his own mind, that his teaching had only been problematical, still he must have been impressed by his friend's efforts on his behalf.

De Peiresc intended to do more than write letters in his search for information. He hoped to get Cardinal Barberini to intervene actively in the matter. He would ask the Cardinal to see to it that Fr. Line was called to Rome, passing through Aix (it was to be hoped with his *horologium*) on the way. This was no mere wishful

<sup>1</sup> *Le Opere di Galileo Galilei* (edizione nazionale 1890-1909), Vol. 16, Letter 3104, pp. 245-8.

thinking on de Peiresc's part. Only two years before he had succeeded in similar plans for another Jesuit scientist, Athanasius Kircher. This Jesuit, while actually on his way to take up an appointment as Mathematician to the Emperor at Vienna, was, due to Barberini's intervention, stimulated by de Peiresc, called to Rome and established in the chair of physics at the Roman College.

While his letters were travelling to their destinations, de Peiresc got down to thinking about the principles that might lie behind the invention. His friend and biographer, Pierre Gassendi, tells us of the thoughts he turned over in his mind those days.<sup>1</sup> De Peiresc wondered if Line's *horologium* could be compared with Drebbel's invention, in which a column of water moved backwards and forwards through a glass tube twice in the day, or with Kircher's claim that a sunflower seed, fixed in a cork floating on water, will turn to follow the passage of the sun across the sky. Perhaps, on the other hand, the sphere functioned in the same way as it was said certain types of precious stones would behave if perfectly spherical in shape and highly polished. He hoped to carry out an experiment to test this idea soon.

De Peiresc wrote another letter to Galileo on 17 April 1635<sup>2</sup> in which he described these reflections and elaborated on his expectations. As yet he had no further information to give about the *horologium* itself: he was still waiting for replies to his letters to Flanders and elsewhere.

It is a pity that we have no records either of Francis Line's reaction to de Peiresc's manoeuvres or of the secret of his invention. Line was at that time forty years old and had been teaching mathematics and physics to Jesuit students at Liège for the past three or four years. He was an enthusiastic scientist and saw nothing against combining his basic Aristotelian philosophy of nature with devotion to experimentation. He had probably already begun his pneumatical and optical experiments which were to bring him notoriety in later years. At the same time he had begun to make his name as a skilled designer and maker of sundials and similar instruments. It had become the fashion for visitors to Liège to call at the English College to see Line's dials. In later

<sup>1</sup> Gassendi, *The Mirrour of True Nobility and Gentility* (translated by W. Rand), London, 1657, Book 5, p. 119.

<sup>2</sup> *Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Vol. 16, Letter 3115, pp. 259-61.



years the visitors were to include the exiled Charles II. After the Restoration, the king's memories of one of these dials, a magnificent structure standing in the terraced gardens behind the College, led him to invite Line to erect a replica of it in the Privy Gardens at Whitehall.

Line's *horologium hydraulicum* had already been attracting attention for some years before de Peiresc heard of it. In 1632 descriptions of it and another of Line's inventions, a dial on which a blind man could tell the time, had been sent to Rome. Line had many scientific friends who visited him at Liège and must have shown interest in his inventions. There must have been a noticeable increase in interest after Mgr. Caraffa's visit. Silvester Petra Sancta was followed by Peter Paul Rubens and Dormalius, and enquiries arrived from de Peiresc at Aix. Possibly also word was received from Rome that Cardinal Francis Barberini had been asking questions. Line could not but have been aware that something was afoot. Perhaps he had even heard that his *horologium hydraulicum* might be of assistance in establishing the Copernican system, and if that were so, he must have been uneasy. It was not safe to show sympathy for Copernicanism at that time.

In spite of much of what has been written about the part played by Jesuits in the Galileo affair, it is not at all clear how far, if at all, the Order as a whole shared the attitude of mind of Melchior Inchofer and Christopher Scheiner, two wholehearted Jesuit opponents of Galileo. The Jesuit missionaries who had propagated Galileo's writings in China in the second decade of the seventeenth century, and their confrères of the Roman College who, in 1611, had triumphantly defended his discoveries in a disputation before Cardinals and other dignitaries, were not the only members of the Order who were impressed by his teachings. There are indications that Line was, at least to some extent, in his favour, and numbered among his friends some loyal supporters of Galileo.

We have no direct evidence of Line's views on astronomy. He certainly taught, as part of his physics course, "the movements and phases of the heavens and the stars,"<sup>1</sup> undoubtedly from the Aristotelian point of view. It is significant, though, that the records of the Inquisition at the Vatican contain no report from Liège corresponding to that issued by the English College at

<sup>1</sup> *Florus Anglo-Bavaricus* (Liège, 1685), p. 30.



Douai<sup>1</sup> following the reception of an order prohibiting the teaching of Copernicanism in seminaries and universities. The Professors of Douai vigorously stated their freedom from all taint of Copernicanism—they had no need for a reform of studies, for they had never taught anything but approved scholastic doctrine. Perhaps their fellow-countrymen at Liège were not in a position to make such a claim.

We have another document which may help to indicate Line's sympathies. It is a letter from the mathematician Wendelin to Mersenne.<sup>2</sup> It was written shortly after word had come to Flanders of the decision of the Inquisition, and it is clear how distressed Wendelin was at the news. He was with his friend Francis Line, he wrote, when they heard of the condemnation. He was astounded, and began to fear that some of his own writings might be condemned. If Line had shown jubilation at the news, or had in the past been opposed to Galileo, Wendelin could hardly have failed to remark on it, in a letter which was obviously written when he was still suffering from shock. Nor do we find any reference to anti-Copernicanism on Line's part in the many letters which passed between de Peiresc and Galileo and their friends in Flanders. However, even if our suspicions of Line's Galilean leanings are justified, he was in no position, once the decision of the Inquisition had been made, to show sympathy for the prisoner at Arcetri.

It does not seem that de Peiresc wrote directly to Line, though it is possible that his friends in Flanders approached the Jesuit in his name. De Peiresc was able to write to Gassendi in June 1635 that his search for information had begun to bear fruit.<sup>3</sup> Dormalius would soon visit Aix, on his way from Flanders to Rome, and would have first-hand information about the invention. Best of all, a letter had come from Galileo himself, and, this, along with some other letters, he promised to send on to Gassendi.

We can surmise, from some remarks in de Peiresc's letter, that Galileo was not as impressed as it had been hoped he would be by Line's *horologium*. In fact, he said he had devised a similar instrument himself. In spite of this somewhat disheartening

<sup>1</sup> Dominico Berti: *Il Processo Originale di Galileo Galilei* (Roma, 1878), pp. 264-5. Document signed "Matthaeus Kellisonus."

<sup>2</sup> *Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Vol. 15, Letter 2545, p. 155, dated 15 June 1633.

<sup>3</sup> *Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Vol. 16, Letter 3132, p. 272.

reaction, de Peiresc was still sufficiently enthusiastic to send on Galileo's letter to Gassendi. Unfortunately, it was never returned, or at least, so de Peiresc insisted. Gassendi, some time later, wrote a most apologetic letter to him, explaining that he had searched carefully among all his papers, but could find no sign of Galileo's letter. He was sure he must have returned it and suggested that de Peiresc should search for it in his own study once more. All the searching, apparently, failed to unearth the letter, and we are left in ignorance of Galileo's comments on Line's invention.<sup>1</sup>

Galileo's lack of enthusiasm must finally have caused de Peiresc to drop his interest in the *horologium hydraulicum*. We hear of no more requests to friends in Flanders for information, no more visitors to Aix who had seen the invention at Liège, no more efforts to have Line called to Rome. It seems to have been realised that the invention could not provide the convincing proof that Galileo sought. Line could now be left in peace and escape the frowns of the Inquisition.

Peace was not, in fact, to be Line's lot. The tide of the Thirty Years War was to sweep out over Flanders, and the English College would have its share of raids and alarms. He would spend fifteen years on the English mission, hardly a peaceful occupation even in Restoration England. His intellectual life would also know battles—mathematical controversies involving Christiaan Huygens and other great scholars, controversies in physics, first with Robert Boyle and then with Isaac Newton. In the midst of the latter controversy, at seventy-five years of age, Line died at the English College of Liège. In none of his scientific battles did he shine. He was not a great scholar, and could not free himself entirely from the hold of the traditional and authoritarian Aristotelianism in which he had been trained. There are few men, though, who could claim, as he might have done, that they had lived through the greatest period of the Scientific Revolution, from Galileo to Newton, and had such contacts with the greatest pioneers of modern science.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Gassendi's letter to de Peiresc of 20 October 1635, in *Opere di Galileo Galilei*, Vol. 16, p. 325, No. 3198.

<sup>2</sup> See THE MONTH (August 1957), N.S. Vol. 18, pp. 108-11, and (May 1959) N.S. Vol. 21, pp. 294-300, for fuller treatment of Francis Line's scientific activities.

## ENTER THE COMMENTATOR

IN THE Instruction on Sacred Music and Liturgy issued by the Congregation of Rites in September 1958, official sanction was given to the practice of commentating at Mass. As might have been expected, this new technique has not always been carried out with success. Letters in the Catholic press still make the occasional appeal for commentators to keep quiet and allow the congregation to get on with their prayers. Many people still regard a commentary as a stunt, a liturgical "gimmick" that has no proper place in a sacred celebration. The wording of the Instruction from the official body deputed to regulate these matters gives a different impression: "The active participation of the faithful, especially in holy Mass and in some of the more complex liturgical services, can be more easily achieved with the help of a 'commentator.' At suitable times he can briefly explain the rites themselves and the prayers and readings of the priest celebrant or the sacred ministers, and direct the external participation of the faithful, that is, their responses, prayers, and singing."<sup>1</sup>

To many priests this new technique presents more than one problem. But growing pains are to be expected before the sacred action can be carried out with that "harmony, dignity, and devoutness"<sup>2</sup> which is the aim of external pastoral discipline. Part of the difficulty would-be commentators meet is the lack of suitable aid-books in English. Some priests have not the time to prepare a commentary for Sunday Mass; others are diffident about experimenting with a new technique of which they have had little or no practical experience. Fr. Howell's new book<sup>3</sup> should prove invaluable to both. These commentaries are ready for immediate use, and can be read verbatim by a priest or cleric from the sanctuary or pre-sanctuary, or if necessary, and as the Instruction permits,<sup>4</sup> by a layman from the body of the church. They cover all the Sundays of the year, together with some seventy other principal feasts, as well as the Votive Masses, including the Nuptial Mass and Mass for the Dead. The commentaries are divided into two sections: one for the Ordinary of the Mass, and the other for the Proper. They are brief, and rarely amount to more than two or three lines of print for each item. They deal with the Collect, Secret, and Postcommunion prayers, the Preface, and the Epistle, where a comment is considered necessary. Before each Mass, a short paragraph gives an explanation

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S., vol. XXV, No. 12, §96.

<sup>2</sup> Inst. §96 [f].

<sup>3</sup> *Commentaries at Mass for Sundays and many Feast Days*, by Clifford Howell, S.J. (Burns and Oates 21s).

<sup>4</sup> 96[b].

of the feast together with historical notes. A selection of commentaries is offered for the various parts of the Ordinary of the Mass, and detailed instructions are given on the best use of the material. Many priests will, of course, prefer to use the book as source material for their own commentaries. For those to whom the whole idea of a commentator is still strange, a detailed explanation of his function and origin is given in the first part of the book. This part is also extremely practical and anticipates the many snags that can and do occur. For it is essential that celebrant and commentator work together. The Instruction insists that the commentator is not to hold up the proceedings with too much talk. He is to fulfil his office "at suitable moments and in very few words." For example, if there is to be a short explanation of the Collect, the celebrant may pause after he says the *Oremus*. The commentator cannot be said to be "delaying the sacred action," when it is only a matter of a few seconds, during which he directly assists the faithful to join in the prayer the priest is saying on their behalf. With the publication of this Instruction, the commentator has definitely "arrived," and those who had any hesitation or scruple about commentaries at Mass can feel reassured.

The book will be found extremely helpful also to those concerned with Mass in schools. The Sunday Masses will not concern day-school teachers, but Commentaries are here provided for a large number of other feasts and Votive Masses, and the introductory instructions concerning the function of the commentator will be a useful guide. The complaint rises continually from the schools that the classroom atmosphere precludes the possibility of serious religious instruction. The fullest use should, then, be made of the liturgy as a pedagogical instrument. Indeed, many classroom lessons can be profitably orientated towards a class or school Mass, and the teacher has all the rich content of the liturgical year, the Scripture readings, and Sacramental doctrine to draw upon. In the sacred atmosphere of the liturgical celebration, the children are pre-disposed to learn, and the catechetical material, rightly presented, can be related to their immediate sacramental experience. The commentator in a school can be a male teacher, and there is no reason why he should not, under the direction of the priest, become expert in the office. The appearance of their teachers near the sanctuary will also greatly assist the pupils to see the Mass as a community celebration.

Fr. Howell's publication is timely, for the effort to implement the directives of the Congregation of Rites has reached a stage in many parts of the country where further development is necessary, if present progress is not to be undone. The Latin dialogue, for example, has in places been taken up with enthusiasm and subsequently dropped, because it was expected to carry the total load of participation. Mere

recitation in Latin does not by itself produce the fullest participation in the action of the Mass. The communal prayer of the faithful is, evidently, capable of ever deeper understanding and conviction. Hence the commentator is important. His function is not on a parallel with the television or radio commentator who merely describes events. He is a true intermediary who helps to unite priest and people. It is not his office simply to say "now the priest takes off the pall; now the priest puts on the biretta" which all can see anyway: his commentary is directed towards the fullest participation on the part of the people, and should contain a judicious blend of explanation, exhortation, points for meditation, but in such a way that he truly mediates and does not become a distraction. This is an art, which requires considerable practice before it is done well.

Fr. Howell stresses the importance of the commentator in helping to create the sense of community which is of the very essence of liturgical worship. "The mere juxtaposition of a number of individuals who happen to have chosen the same time and place to fulfil a personal obligation does not, of itself, constitute them into a community." It makes all the difference to the atmosphere in a church when the people feel there is somebody on the sanctuary interested in them and actually talking to them. If they are addressed by a commentator, they at once become an audience, and not simply a collection of individuals. Further, the hierarchical nature of the Church becomes evident, when they see a variety of functions in operation. The activities of celebrant, commentator, reader, perhaps choir, help to create in the congregation the sense of belonging to an articulated body in whose functioning they, too, have their part to play. There is an ebb and flow in the liturgical action. The people receive the Word of God, preached to them in different ways from the sanctuary, and they make response together, gathering their resources into the integrated worship of the Church. The commentator helps them to do this. We are in Fr. Howell's debt for yet one more notable contribution to the Liturgical movement in this country, in full accordance with the directives of the Holy See.

ALOYSIUS CHURCH



## REVIEWS

### SOCRATES AND CALVIN

*Socrates and the Human Conscience*, by Micheline Sauvage in collaboration with Marie Sauvage. Translated by P. Hepburne-Scott (Longmans 6s).

*Calvin and the Calvinistic Tradition*, by Albert-Marie Schmidt. Translated by R. Wallace (Longmans 6s).

SOCRATES wrote nothing himself, and the accounts of him differ widely. He mattered enough for his fellow-citizens to execute him; for the comedian Aristophanes to caricature him fiercely; for the normal soldier Xenophon to argue that Socrates too was fairly normal and anyhow innocent; for Plato positively to worship him and yet to make us feel that Socrates could tease people to exasperation-point and beyond. We can discount the caricature, especially as the *Clouds* was not successful: Xenophon's playing-down of Socrates may have been not only deliberate but due to his really being unable to see deeper: we may trust Plato if only because, as his own philosophy gathers strength, the personality of Socrates fades. All the more are we impressed by the limpid realism of his account of Socrates's death. The authors, we think, accept that Socrates was "converted" at Delphi, and by the old adage "Know thyself" he understood that he must interiorise his life; must act as a midwife and bring the true inmost self, stifled beneath conventions and formulae, to light and life, whether in himself or in anyone who listened to him. Whether to act as a gadfly was the best method for achieving this, we may doubt; too often the right thing is done the wrong way. The Establishment would have none of him. Obedient to his daemon, he long refused to defend himself. We need not suppose that this daemon (which warned him only of what he must not do) was a separate spirit, nor regard it simply as his conscience (and we would readily admit his conscience was unusually open to grace). It made him still more of an individualist and, as such (Unamuno is quoted as saying), would not fit into any "pigeon-hole": he could not be *encasillado*. The authors agree that he entered into that *praeparatio evangelica* which many a Christian Father held Greek philosophy to be. The book is carefully thought out, and more or less apt quotations from other authors are added. There are many illustrations, but we are sure that those taken from the rounded surface of vases should be flattened out, if they are to be convincing.

The book on Calvin is prefaced by a 1532 engraving of a man standing by a tree from which branch after branch is being lopped off, while a few remain seemingly wounded, but bandaged tightly: on the



picture are printed the words, *Noli altum sapere sed time*. No exact clue to this allegory is offered. It is followed by another showing a hand gripping a sword, between the initials I. C.; around this is printed: "The Word of the Lord is living and efficacious and more piercing than any two-edged sword" (Hebr. 4). The author does not profess to write a new Life of Calvin, whose "over-sensitive modesty" caused him to be so reticent that "many obscure episodes" in his career perforce remain obscure. Nor does he make any complete summary of his doctrine, but wishes to "bring out the basic features of a man's mind," leading readers to recognise "the unchanging relevance of the tasks he undertook, and the pressing urgency of the religious problems which he tried to solve." Intended for the law, over a long space of time he became interested in the work of the Reformers, and increasingly hoped that their doctrines might be accepted without schism. But in May, 1534, he was "struck by an irresistible grace whose lightning stroke reduced to ashes his strongest scruples." He also "received his call to be a doctor of the Church. . . . His task was to define for this (the Protestant) Church her faith." Indeed, the very next year he felt that too many sectarian groups were propagating false ideas throughout Europe: they sprang from "the scum of the Anabaptists." He was determined to fight those who have "such a passion to embrace arrant nonsense, to snap like dogs and howl insults." He began to write the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which he constantly emended. M. Schmidt says: "It bases Christian orthodoxy on so firm a foundation that no controversy has ever been able to shake it to the point of danger." No inconsiderable claim. He kept stressing his wish for a retired scholarly life, but Bucer insisted that it was God's will that he should shepherd the desolate flock and reminded him of what happened to the escapist Jonah. So he was drawn back to Geneva, and as early as November 1541 drew up Ordinances according to which all the civil officials and people of the city pledged themselves to a life of rigid discipline. Anyone who indulged in dogmatic speculations opposed to the established doctrine was, first, privately warned; then, if obdurate, might receive more severe treatment; finally, if still obstinate, he was to be refused Communion and denounced to the magistrate. The burning alive of the Spaniard Servetus (1553), whom he regarded as the incarnation of the errors which he hated (but especially, that God heard the prayers of the very Turks and that natural goodness could be seen by Him as justification), has been over-emphasised. Everywhere, heterodoxy was regarded as attack on civil society no less than on religion. M. Schmidt says that he does not wish to alienate such readers as may feel favourably disposed towards Calvin by trying to give a summary of his doctrinal teaching, so what he does provide is necessarily selective, and

we are guided towards thinking more about the man than of his work. His constant illnesses were increased, if not caused by, the pitch of nervous tension at which he lived. He preached and taught almost without intermission, save when he took short walks and even played bowls, when "traces of a faint smile" might be detected on his lips. He would dictate or write in his clear logical French (which M. Schmidt contrasts with the style and arguments of Rabelais!) through constant interruptions, and even while his sores were being dressed. The author insists that Calvin taught no system, that predestination was not his central doctrine, that Geneva was not the heart of a theocracy. But the system was there, though not syllogistically shaped: predestination follows inexorably from the dogma of the total ruin of human nature owing to original sin. Arminius, who defended the survival of free will after the Fall, was solemnly condemned in 1619. What Geneva, at any rate, thought was the spirit of the five Reformers is seen in the icily grim monument put up to their honour. It is interesting how both Socrates and Calvin each created a definite type of portraiture: the former, a genially ugly figure softened and idealised as time went on; the latter, a practically unchanging presentment of a man with immensely long, knife-edged nose, hollowed eyes and cheeks, and mouth whose lines express his intensity of will, risking a fanaticism that could lead even to cruelty. The sketches by his student Bourguoin are alarming. We respect M. Schmidt's devotion to Calvin. This is a warm-hearted book, and we are in no doubt as to Calvin's honesty, though we are sure he would not recognise the version of himself offered by Karl Barth, with which the book finishes.

C. C. MARTINDALE

#### GROWTH AND REFINEMENT

*The New Oxford History of Music*. Vol. III: *Ars Nova and the Renaissance (1300-1540)*, edited by Dom Anselm Hughes and Gerald Abraham (Oxford University Press 63s).

THE SIGNIFICANCE of the musical developments which took place in the early fourteenth century was emphasised by Philippe de Vitry when he gave to the treatise in which he explained them the title *Ars Nova*. Gilbert Reaney, in his brilliant opening chapter in this new volume, "*Ars Nova in France*," draws attention to the unrest of the period: the corruption of nobility and clergy, the Schism, the Hundred Years' War, famine, excessive taxation. Yet "in spite of all this, art and music flourished, though often in *fin-de-siècle* forms which reveal an excessive preoccupation with detail." In music this showed itself particularly in an increasing complexity of rhythm and

rhythmic notation. To a modern observer composition at this period seems frequently to have been a somewhat arid, quasi-mathematical exercise (though who in our generation shall cast the first stone?), and, indeed, the medieval mind regarded music as a science not far removed from arithmetic. De Vitry himself, for example, is known to have consulted the mathematician Gersonides.

Actual performance, however, shows the intrinsic musical interest of much of this music which, of course, also demands our attention because its increased technical resources made possible the evolution of musical composition to the great fruition of the sixteenth century. Through this wonderful period of organic growth this present volume guides us, until we reach the mature Renaissance style of Josquin des Prez, for the later sixteenth-century composers had little to add except in the way of increased refinement. Indeed it is only gradually that Palestrina has overshadowed Josquin who, as Nanie Bridgman points out in the chapter on "The Age of Ockeghem and Josquin," was described even in the eighteenth century as "the greatest luminary of this great science, from whom have learned all the contrapuntists who have come after him." And as vocal polyphony reaches its highest peak we become aware not so much of the birth of instrumental music as of the foundation of a genuinely instrumental and especially a keyboard style, examined here by Yvonne Rokseth.

Sharing the authorship of a history has notorious disadvantages, but these are surely outweighed when, as here, each chapter is the work of a foremost authority—people such as Manfred Bukofzer ("Popular and secular music in England to c. 1470" and "English Church Music of the fifteenth century"), Charles Van Den Borren ("Dufay and his school"), and Frank Ll. Harrison ("English Church Music in the fourteenth century") to mention only a few, and when the volume as a whole is shaped by a firm and balanced editorial policy. From this last point of view especially the present volume is the most successful of the series to date and a good augury for the future.

ERIC TAYLOR

## TRADITION AND THE ORDINARY MUSE

*Nymph, in Thy Orisons*, by Wrenne Jarman (St. Albert's Press 16s).  
*The Three-Sighted*, by H. M. Wilson (Centaur Press 8s 6d).

**M**R. H. M. WILSON has a quiet, pleasant talent a little clogged here and there by a Tennysonian *tristesse*, but lucid and fundamentally strong. His poems have the structural value and sometimes the dry lines of an experienced metaphysical poet, and some of the

better ones seemed to me reminiscent of Frances Cornford. He likes gardens and ruins and snow, and they genuinely move him. He has an excellent quiet eye for a word or phrase, his roads are leaf-quietened and his autumns spectacular, but perhaps his reading has been too much that of an older generation for the texture of his language to look attractive to a younger one. These poems have a distilled and literary quality like that of late classic epigrams. Nothing that draws so devotedly on a strong tradition can avoid this appearance.

Yet his own senses are observant and even sharp. This is not the young Shakespeare of *Venus and Adonis*, his waking senses or his hardening intellectuality, but a meditative, sensitive, middle-aged poet whose best perceptions are elegiac. He has a conscious religious sense, makes small jokes about Picasso and TV, and rouses once or twice a faint but unmistakable echo of Belloc or Kipling. I could make rather little of the religious allegory with which the book ends.

*Nymph, in thy Orisons* is a posthumous last book of poems by Wrenne Jarman, issued in a limited edition by the St. Albert's Press, with an interesting letter from Edmund Blunden and a memoir. She had a very old-fashioned idea of what poetry was about, but she also had a good ear and a strongly marked personal life, so that some curious twist of rhetoric may suddenly bring one on an excellent line or two, and then back perhaps into rather a hollow ending. The moral and religious structure of the poems is traditional but obviously deeply felt, and the stylised language shakes under the strain of such sincerity.

This very personal collection ends with a series of sonnets on the Stations of the Cross, which was unhappily incomplete when Miss Jarman died. There are signs in these twelve powerful meditations that they were poetry on a far greater scale than anything else she wrote. She left one small masterpiece, a translation of Baudelaire's poem about cats.

PETER LEVI

#### MARGERY KEMPE

*Margery Kempe: An Example in the English Pastoral Tradition*, by Martin Thornton (S.P.C.K. 15s).

THIS LITTLE BOOK rightly directs our attention to some of Margery Kempe's characteristics which have been ignored or neglected. The sensational circumstances of the *Book's* discovery, one of the most startling "finds" in the history of English letters, and the *Book's* more sensational episodes, have undoubtedly distracted our attention from its soberer, solider contents. Yet when the present author begins by complaining about the time which has been wasted on

disproving, or proving, Margery's claims as a true ecstatic visionary, he is not being altogether fair; the question is in the first place raised by her, and her *Book* constantly asserts or suggests her right to be compared, not to her discredit, with the greatest of the women mystics, and particularly with St. Bridget of Sweden. She says that God told her categorically that her *charismata* are from Him, and are the attributes of sanctity, and, in another place, describing a miraculous vision of the Blessed Sacrament, that Christ said to her "You will never see it like this again, so thank God that you have seen it now. My daughter Bridget never saw Me like this." And if at the end of the *Book* one is forced to conclude that Margery's "revelations" were subjective, the stuff of her own imagination, composed of her recollections of Scripture and the Church's teachings and liturgy, often inspired by contemporary devotional literature and art-objects, such a conclusion, whilst in no way impugning her own sincerity and piety, must debar us from giving the other manifestations of her "spirituality" quite the degree of serious attention which this present work suggests that they merit. Margery has to do as many of us do, plodding along and making the best use she can of such intelligence as God has given her; and her own recognition of her limitations is nowhere more clearly shown than in the "revelations" of how she refused knowledge of the mysteries of the Godhead. So far as we can tell from her *Book*, such knowledge never was vouchsafed to her; the furthest she goes is in her very elementary similitude of the three cushions which symbolise the three Persons—about as far as the most of us get. When this study speaks of her "pure contemplation," it is setting her claims far too high: "revelation" and "contemplation" seldom seem to her to mean more than what she calls "dalliance," the constant dialogues between her soul and the inhabitants of the supernatural world which seem to be nothing but the projections of her own addled but holy brain. We are very rightly reminded here that Margery can serve as example and encouragement for us all: her wonderful patience under hardships and persecutions, and her constant intercession for sinners living and dead, no less than her many loving acts of mercy towards the poor and afflicted, make her truly venerable. And finally, though we cannot expect the present writer in the development of his particular thesis to say this, her clear grasp of the Faith and her unswerving obedience to the Church, whether she was arraigned as heretic or reviled as zealot, mark her out. Whether she was a pseudo-Bridget or, as is now claimed, an English optimist-humanist, is beside the point; what did inform her whole life was her single-minded Catholicism.

ERIC COLLEDGE



## SHORTER NOTICES

*The Hidden Springs: An Enquiry into Extra-Sensory Perception*, by Renée Haynes (Hollis and Carter 30s).

RENÉE HAYNES' BOOK, though serene and good-humoured throughout, is a double challenge—to the out-and-out materialist who will not admit anything save what can be scientifically tested, but also to the believer who rather plumes himself on being ordinary, and to the timid, who doesn't want to be "mixed up with that sort of thing"; the indolent, who shelters himself under the bans upon participation in spiritualism and even attendance at séances as onlookers, not experimentalists. As a matter of fact, this book could have been written, though inadequately, without direct allusion to spiritualism or religion, whether to rebuke or recommend them. The book covers all phenomena where sensory communication would be normal but seems not to exist—seeing or hearing what eye or ear normally could not; direct communication of mind with mind independently of space and even time (including pre-cognition); motion due to no physical force (table-turning up to levitation); magic and miracles. Is, then, something other than "mind" and "matter" and their normal behaviour to be assumed? The author, trained to judge evidence, and, mercifully, endowed with a sense of humour, admits it, adopting the technical name *psi*, but refusing to define what *psi* is or how it works. She remembers that she is taking the stand-point, and speaking the language, of the uncommitted investigator. Beginning, however, from the data of Revelation and theology, we know that in "man" matter and spirit are mysteriously so conjoined as to form a complex unit, the human "person." But, with the progressive consequences of original sin, "disorder" has spread throughout the created world, so that body and soul are two imperfect entities imperfectly conjoined and ill at ease with one another. We know how readily the senses attack, seek to obliterate, and "quench" their spiritual co-efficient; and again, we are learning what devastating (yet also, helpful) effects the mind can have upon the body: see H. Thurston: *The Physical Phenomena of Mysticism*, not least the case of Mlle Jahenny, especially p. 203. So why should we wonder if the spirit, restless in its ill-adjusted wedlock, should not try to lunge out independently, emancipated from weights and measures, mileage and clock-time? Indeed, seeing how ignorant we are of what "matter" is, but directly aware of the spiritual in us and its rightful claim to priority, it may seem surprising that the soul does not make many more independent attempts than it does; but not, that these experiments are so habitually at best no more than half-successful. The excursus on *jettatura*, the non-maliciously-intended effects of the "evil eye," is of interest. Along



the line of our own surmise, since men are created to live "socially," an exceptionally (though innocently) maladjusted mind may inevitably cause disturbance in minds that it encounters. It remains that we are puzzled by the effects of mind on disconnected matter (poltergeist freaks), and quite baffled by precognition of non-necessitated events. When this has issued into good, we have inclined to assign the experience directly to God. That God intends the survival of "matter" and its perfect control by "spirit" is made clear to us by Our Lord's post-resurrectional appearances, and the destiny of our glorified body, according to St. Paul (1 Cor. 15, 25, sqq.).

*A Scientist Who Believes in God*, by H. N. V. Temperley, S.C. (Cantab) (Hodder and Stoughton 1958).

THE TITLE of Dr. Temperley's book suggests that we should be astonished; and really ought we to be? For we hold that knowledge of what is created should lead to the knowledge and worship of the Creator, and the more one knows of the former, the more one should know of God. (It is not given to all to be, like Newman, at once aware of two certainties, God and self.) But men of science who ask how the universe began nearly always begin in the middle, and are really asking how this particular arrangement of "things" came to be. But why are there any "things" at all? Why do they change? No good taking refuge in abstracts, like Energy (replacing that old "life-force"!), or even Evolution: "Music" cannot be said to account for a developing symphony. Such scientists, then, begin in the middle, among things already existing and changing. The author successfully shows how unreliable are "materialist" theories based on data continually being added to what already is so shifting; though he thinks that life may, in some immensely distant future, be artificially produced: perhaps he does not insist enough on what is purely spiritual—i.e., self-consciousness, "reflection"; and he might have spent longer on the problem of free will, which surely cannot "evolve" out of what is wholly powerless to choose. We think too it was mistaken to introduce allusions to Christianity or the Scriptures before he has finished with what we might call "natural theology," especially as the expression "law" (of nature) has not yet been rescued from its ambiguity, and he has not yet made it clear whether we can acknowledge more than the probable veracity of the Biblical records. He certainly accepts them as substantially historical, but agrees that "however firm our faith, we can hardly afford to rely on the Bible alone." "Today, we could hardly understand a political pamphlet about Napoleon without expert help." But then, who is to interpret the interpreters? St. Athanasius would have been appalled by the

suggestion that he meant, by the Three Divine Persons, just three "aspects" of the One God. The impression left on us is that of a number of hypotheses the materialist or rationalist ones should be discarded, and that we should lean most heavily on the spiritual one which, when it concerns both the Message and the personal history of Christ can safely be relied on. Some details may be "accretions," but the substance is solid. We venture to say that the writer of a book like this should have submitted himself to *two* disciplines—scientific and historical, or philosophical, or scriptural; thus the result would be less scattered and firmer both in outline and in content. We fully agree with the author that those who discuss these matters should thoroughly examine the arguments adducible by both sides.

*Garibaldi*, by Peter de Polnay (Hollis and Carter 25s).

ON FIRST READING this work one feels that the treatment of the whole subject is far too frivolous. After all, the apparently comic opera events described were costing human lives. But on reflection the reader may agree that the light-hearted way in which the story is told is the best antidote to the rather pernicious legend which has gathered round Garibaldi. This legend was the product of Victorian self-satisfaction and anti-Catholic superstition. It is time it was forgotten. A nation which tolerated the slums of North Britain was not in the situation to criticise Neapolitan prisons.

The book is an account of Garibaldi with special reference to some of the remarkable people, such as Dumas *père*, who tried to write his biography. It abounds in delicious anecdotes and tells us the origin of the famous red shirts. If the "life" of Garibaldi is well treated of, his "times" are not so fully dealt with. This is a pity, since in an attempt to put Garibaldi in his proper perspective in the struggle for Italian unity a little more of the background, the motives behind the policy of Napoleon, for example, might have been allowed to appear.

Nevertheless the relative unimportance of Garibaldi's contribution to the cause is clearly shown. He had a propaganda value, undoubtedly. His personality attracted favourable attention, from the public abroad in a way that that of Cavour, the real architect of Italian unity, could not. But the people that really mattered could not but regard Garibaldi as an irresponsible meddler whose next move could scarcely be predicted. He gave those under whose command he fought some anxious moments and the news that he was coming to offer his sword to France in her hour of need was not received with enthusiasm. When the inevitable post-mortem took place after the war, it was more than hinted that had Garibaldi been a Frenchman he would have had to face a court martial. Nor was it thought fitting that an Italian

should expel Frenchmen from their own country, even if they did happen to be Jesuits.

When all is said and done one is left wondering if, in fact, the author has been fair to his hero. After all, it was Pius IX who said that the only people who made nothing out of the Risorgimento were Garibaldi and himself. This is a fascinating book to read none the less.

*Love of Christ: A Little Anthology from Writings and Inscriptions of the First Three Centuries*, by Lev Gillet (Mowbray 3s).

*The Wisdom of the Desert: Sayings from the Desert Fathers of the Fourth Century*, translated and introduced by Thomas Merton (Hollis and Carter 16s).

*Lamps of Fire, From the Scriptures and Wisdom of the World*, chosen by Juan Mascaró (Methuen 21s).

LOVE OF CHRIST, a recent and handy addition to the Fleur de Lys Series, consists of thirty short extracts drawn from sources in the first three centuries, ranging from the Oxyrhynchus Papyri to the *Acta Maximiliani*, and illustrates the fervent love and faith of the early Christians. Maximilian, a young conscript, refused military service and told the proconsul, "I will not be a soldier. Cut off my head if you will. I cannot be a soldier for the world. I am a soldier for my God." St. Irenaeus wrote, "What did Our Lord bring at His coming? Know that He brought all newness, by bringing Himself. For this was announced: a Newness would come, in order to renew man and give him life."

By the fourth century the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, Arabia and Persia were places of refuge for Christian hermits who regarded the world, in the words of Thomas Merton, "as a shipwreck from which each single individual man had to swim for his life." Some of the sayings and stories of these hermits, from the *Verba Seniorum*, have been collected in *The Wisdom of the Desert*, a fascinating book, which is beautifully set in clear Dante type and printed at Verona. The Desert Fathers believed in taking the boiling pot off the fire. "One of the Fathers said: Just as it is impossible for a man to see his face in troubled water, so too the soul, unless it is cleansed of alien thoughts, cannot pray to God in contemplation." Fr. Merton suggests, in his thoughtful introduction, that they declined to be ruled by men, and had no desire to rule over others. These fourth-century exemplars stand in sharp distinction to "the great regression to the herd mentality that is taking place now."

Mr. Juan Mascaró's book, *Lamps of Fire*, was originally published in a limited edition, and many will be grateful that it is now available to a wider circle of happy readers. These "lamps of fire" are the living words garnered from the ages to sustain and console the heart of man.

"Be like a tree which covers with flowers the hand that shakes it" comes from old Japan; and St. Peter of Alcántara: "Let a man return into his own self, and there in the centre of his soul, let him wait upon God, as one who listens to another speaking from a high tower, as though he had God in his heart, as though in the whole creation there was only God and his soul."

*The Science of the Cross: A Study of St. John of the Cross*, by Edith Stein. Edited by Dr. L. Gelber and Fr. Romanus Leuven, O.D.C. Translated by Hilda Graef (Burns and Oates 30s).

EDITH STEIN'S HISTORY might well be contrasted with that of Simone Weil. Born in 1891, a Jewess, at Breslau, she crowned a brilliant career of studies by receiving the doctorate of philosophy in the University of Freiburg im Breisgau in 1916. She became assistant to E. Husserl, founder of the school of phenomenology, here defined as "the discovery and analysis of essences and essential meanings." In 1922 she became a Catholic and in 1934 a Carmelite nun. In 1938 she was sent to Holland, but was arrested by the Gestapo in 1942 and killed in the gas chamber of Auschwitz. This is the first of three volumes of her printed works. The second consists of a purely philosophical work, *Finite and Eternal Being*, the third of educational essays. If these two later volumes, which were in fact written before the study of St. John of the Cross, are to be translated, we hope they will be entrusted to the same translator, so smooth and lucid is her style. Here, then, we have no biography of the saint, but an examination of his spiritual life and of his psychology "in depth." This is amply justified because the saint offered no systematic body of doctrine. His explanations of his poems were not finished, or perhaps have been mutilated. This may have been for fear of the Inquisition, which was always on the look-out for false illuminism of which ill-wishers, not least among his brethren, could easily accuse him. Further, John himself does not insist on readers interpreting every detail of his symbolism in an identical way. In *The Living Flame of Love* he breaks off, when writing of the "breathing" of the Holy Spirit in the soul, saying that it is ineffable and incomprehensible. There is a second recension of the sublime poem, logically put last, after the *Ascent*, the *Dark Night* and the *Living Flame*, i.e., when he carries the image of the Bridal with Christ so far that commentators have felt he had already achieved his goal. True to her philosophy, the author seeks the origin and development of St. John's dominant images—Dark, Cross, Wedlock—carefully warning us when ideas not drawn directly from the saint's writing are being used. After all, no one dealing with this topic can avoid spatial metaphors, like the

"inmost of the soul" or its "fine point." Few save St. Teresa and, less exactly we think, St. John of the Cross, can both remember and analyse their mystical experiences. For most people, we think, much introspection is seldom healthy; and indeed, we prefer St. John's poems, even unrevised, to his explanatory prose. Few, indeed, reach further than the agonies or desiccation of spiritual purification, till they reach the pains and joys of Purgatory. Then they are approaching the Threshold!

*Joyful Mother of Children*, by a Loreto Sister (Gill 30s).

IT IS TO BE HOPED that this book will be judged by its paper cover, rather than by its title which jars upon the modern ear. The life of Mother Frances Mary Teresa Ball, foundress of the Irish branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is worthy of place beside those of the other three great Irish foundresses, Mother McAulay, Mother Aikenhead and Vano Nagle, but the tale is somewhat marred in the telling by pious purple patches, and the author would have been well advised to keep the story of the Loreto foundations in England, Spain, Canada, America, India, Africa and Australia separate from the life of Mother Ball, which becomes obscured by the very fecundity of her family. The book is well-presented with numerous illustrations, but too many of these show convents dotted round the globe, or beaming classes of Indian or Canadian schoolgirls. It is baffling to find that the Canadian and American convents have *Loretto* instead of *Loreto*, but this book should interest old girls of the convents of both observances.

*Last Cracks in Fabulous Cloisters*, by Brother Cholerick (Sheed and Ward 10s 6d).

BROTHER CHOLERIC will go no more a-roving through monasteries and convents to give us peeps behind the scenes, and this may be as well, for he has lost in these drawings the first fine careless rapture of his two preceding books of cartoons. Imitators, too, have sprung up in quantities, who lack the good taste of the originator of *Cracks in the Cloister* and *Nuts in the Nunnery*. Good-bye, then, to Brother Cholerick, and many thanks for letting a little fresh air into stuffy parlours and enlightening the dimness of functionaries who "take even themselves quite seriously." Not to be able to laugh at oneself is a sorry lack, and it is sad indeed if prelates and prioresses turn too pompous to be able to do so. The cartoon which had most appeal for the reviewer in this volume shows a small boy pointing to a vast church loud-speaker and asking a harassed-looking monk, "Does God have to speak through one of these?" *Ave atque vale*, Brother Cholerick; a large part of you has escaped Libitina.



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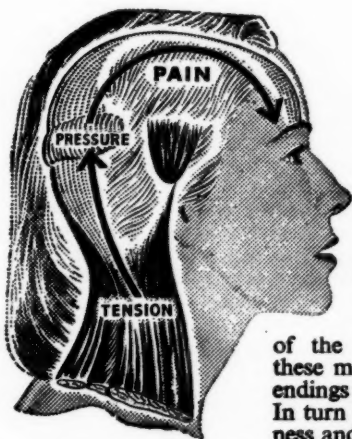
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